

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS
St. George Town Office
MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2020 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Members present were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present: Tim Polky, Terri-Lynn Baines, Tara Elwell, John Falla, and Loreen Myers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: John Falla thanked the town office staff and election officials noting a job well done in how they handled the recent election. Falla noted that he had been involved with every presidential election since 1984 and this was the first election he had not been involved in.

Lauren Myers also noted that this was a fantastic election and the town handled it beautifully.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustment was made to the agenda:

- An Executive Session with the Select Board was added and held after the Regular Board meeting.

- Minutes: The minutes of October 19, 2020, were corrected as follows:

Page 1, under Utilities, line 1, 2nd sentence, change to read: **Polky cautioned that this category also included fuel purchases.**

Page 1, under Payroll for RP, line 4, correct to: It is not known what the cost of the elections will be **as also two** town meetings will be held this fiscal year.

Page 2, under GRRSM, 1st paragraph, lines 2 & 3: **The Town will manage GRRSM until June 30, 2023, then it will move to the next town.**

Page 2, under Solid Waste, lines 2 & 3, change to read: **The Equipment Lease spending was low because of** errors in billing.

Page 2, under 10 Cold Storage Road, paragraph 2, lines 2 & 3, change to: ...because of the **way** property tax **is reported.**

Page 3, third full paragraph, line 3, change the word the to **will**

Page 5, line 1, change from to **for.**

Page 2, 4th complete paragraph, line 1, change to read: ... by Elwell **to** approve the...

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Elwell, to approve the October 19, 2020, Select Board minutes, as corrected. The vote was 4-0 (Willey abstained). Motion carried.

- Communications: Donation thank you letters were received from the following Social and Community Service organizations: New Hope for Women, Maine Public, Rockland District Nursing, Trekker's, Lifelight, Knox Clinic, Coastal Opportunities, the Area Interfaith Outreach (AIO), and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of November 9, 2020, was reviewed. The total expenses were \$277,952.59 and included four weeks of payroll, a payment of \$2,123.69 for two deliveries of rock salt, a payment of \$2,706.45 to Rockingham Electric for LED lights, a payment of \$2,250 for mound and infield maintenance on the sports field, a payment of \$144,037.50 to

Hager Enterprises for paving Glenmere Road, a payment of \$1,330 to Art Henry for hauling out town floats, a payment of \$1,000 to Ocean Explorer for retrieving channel markers, a payment of \$30,504 to J. K. Kalloch as the town's first snowplow payment, and other regular expenses.

There were no questions regarding the warrant. Select Board members will sign the warrant by scanning to email, fax it in, or go to the office to sign it.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Paving. Polky reported that the shoulder material on the new pavement on Glenmere Road was finished.

Training Building. Work has begun on the training building. The pouring of concrete for the foot walls will be on Tuesday, November 10 at 1 p.m.

Fire Department Hose Testing. The Bureau of Insurance required that all hoses be tested and after months of waiting, the fire department got them all tested.

Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDA denied the grant on 10 Cold Storage Road. The EDA sent a letter stating they were sorry they had to deny the grant, but Alan Brigham and the Regional Director of the US Department of Commerce EDA were encouraging them to resubmit the application. They have both given suggestions on how to fix several of the issues. Polky said the Harbor Committee will be meeting in person at 6 p.m. on Thursday, November 12th. Polky will send the Select Board members a copy of the EDA letter.

Selectperson Willey asked if there was a specific amount for the grant? Polky said it was \$2,000,000.

Chair Bates stated, "The issue has been that the initial cost of the 10 Cold Storage Road construction was a much underestimate of the true cost. When the engineer started to look at the problem then coupled with the result of the steel tariffs with China, and other factors that put up the cost of the construction, the whole project became a lot more expensive. I think it remains a very worthwhile project for the town to pursue, so we will see what the Harbor Committee decides. But I hope they will agree to resubmit the application with the adjustments that Brigham suggested."

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported the committee met on Thursday, November 5, 2020, at 4 p.m. and discussed trails. The committee has completed their trail work for the season. They had 17 work trips this year which calculated into 193.5 volunteer hours. They are now focusing on the Fort Point Trail and along with the ad hoc committee are trying to move the project along quickly as there are timelines that need to be completed as soon as possible.

Thirty-six (36) participants attended the last education event via Zoom, and the Conservation Commission was very pleased with the attendance. They are planning another solar energy event and more information will be forthcoming. The CC would like to get the residents more involved in solar energy. There is an ongoing discussion about solar farms.

The CC had a lengthy discussion on evasives and how more insects and plants were coming into Maine and how people could try to eradicate them. More information on this topic can be found on the state website.

The Conservation Commission has been working on the Resource Maps for the town and they hope to have the map updates completed by the end of this year.

The CC has been watching a project at Boulder Hill related to putting a culvert in for smelts and they will continue to monitor that project and its outcome.

Selectperson Willey reported that the Conservation Commission wanted it relayed that they have a very nice home page on the town's website. For more information on the Commission, go to the St. George (town's) website and click on their home page.

Chair Bates thanked Tara Elwell for working with the Conservation Commission in getting their website sorted out and set up. Selectperson Willey noted that the CC does a lot of updates, so any pertinent and new information gets posted quickly.

- Fort Point Trail Ad hoc Committee: Selectperson Hall reported the Committee met on October 29, 2020, and several issues were flagged. He stated that one of the big concerns was, "Would the (state) MDOT be agreeable to providing a right of way to us for access to the trail? Tim met with them and that looks like that is going to be fine. It looks like there is a high probability of reaching an agreement with them. So, that one significant potential hurdle appears to be overcome."

Selectperson Hall said the second issue was, "The state will ask for a long-term maintenance agreement with us. There is a question of how to get maintenance equipment down there. Tim talked with Richard Paulsen about the possibility of a right of way. Richard was not pleased with the idea of increased traffic being down there, so a follow-up meeting was to be scheduled so that he could express his concerns to a broader group of people so we could get a better understanding of those and consider if there was an adequate way to address his concerns."

An RFP was drafted. It was sent to three engineering firms to propose updating the plan that had been submitted for a Universal Access (UA) trail. The firms would review that plan, create a plan for UA on Fort Point, and would be stamped by a Professional Engineer (PE). It would also include a survey of the property. Selectperson Hall stated that two firms indicated that they would respond with proposals by November 10. He noted that a follow-up Ad hoc committee meeting was scheduled for November 12, and one of the topics would be to review the proposals.

Selectperson Hall reported that the Historical Society published information about this project and received a \$500 contribution. He said that Oelberger contacted Georges River Land Trust and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) regarding this project and both expressed interest and excitement about it. MCHT said they might be able to contribute financially to the upfront engineering cost.

Selectperson Hall stated that Doug Beck of the Bureau of Parks and Lands will be attending the November 12 meeting. The two specific points of his attendance will be to talk with them about how the multiple grants can be combined so that the town will not have to put up the match

that is normally required of these plans and to get more details so the committee understands the timing of when these need to be submitted. Beck will also have more specifics about what needs to be included in the maintenance agreement that the town will assume.

Selectperson Hall noted that for the October 29th meeting, Oelberger had updated the PERT chart. Hall said that the amount of work being done by the members on this committee is quite impressive and a lot of ground has been covered in a short period of time. He added that the Ad hoc committee is on a two-week meeting schedule to see if they can continue to move this project along.

- Cemetery Committee: Selectperson Hall reported the in-person committee meeting scheduled for October 28th, was canceled due to the rise in COVID cases. (It was too late to schedule a Zoom meeting.) Hall said he recently learned that their next meeting scheduled for November 12 conflicted with a Harbor Committee meeting. He said he could coordinate a Zoom meeting with his account if the town approved, and it was organized through the town. Selectperson Hall felt it would be good to hold the cemetery meeting because he thought the committee wanted to move forward and have an attorney investigate the title issues, and make a proposal on what the vehicle would be for the town to take over that property. Hall thought it would be a quick meeting as the committee had already discussed this.

Falla added that it would be a short meeting and as far as coordinating the Zoom meeting, he recommended talking with Terri-Lynn Baines about doing that. Polky did not see a problem with Selectperson Hall using his Zoom account, as long as the public was given the opportunity to access the meeting and join in. Terri-Lynn said she would help Selectperson Hall in advertising the meeting and help procedurally in setting up the Zoom meeting.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met at 7:00 p.m. on October 27, 2020.

- The permit application to replace the sea wall between 3 & 6 Boatyard Road was accepted as complete; an onsite visit was waived as it had been visited previously. Satisfying the Shoreland Zone Ordinance section 16D, p.50, and having already been approved by the Army Corps and DEP, the project was approved.
- The permit application to build a storage shed at 65 Main Street (St. George School) was accepted as complete. The Board determined that the project satisfied all the Performance Standards in the Site Plan Review, and thus it was approved.
- The application to install a granite-supported pier, a seasonal ramp, and float at 87 Haupt Road was tabled, as the applicant was not in attendance.
- The application for a pier, ramp, and float at Glenmere Road was reviewed and an onsite visit scheduled for 9:00 am Saturday, November 14.
- The change-of-use application to cultivate medical marijuana at 56 Mussel Farm Road was reviewed further and accepted as complete for the purposes of determining its approval. The Board agreed that the Shoreland Zone Ordinance requires an application of this type to satisfy both that it is an agricultural use and is also functionally water-

dependent; as this one does not meet the latter requirement, the Board voted to disapprove the application.

- Sea Level Rise Ad hoc Committee Report: Chair Bates reported that he and Dan Verrillo met on a Zoom call with other Penobscot Bay communities in an event organized by the University of Maine collaborating towards climate solutions. It was an opportunity to compare notes on what different towns were doing. This group included North Haven, Vinalhaven, Belfast, Rockland, Islesboro, So. Thomaston, Camden, Lincolnville, and St. George.

Chair Bates noted that one thing that did come out of the meeting, which they may have to do something about, is the anticipation that in future, State grants will require that the Town's Comprehensive Plan include something about Sea Level Rise. Chair Bates said they have talked about trying to put in an application to help with Drift Inn Beach Road and perhaps that application will be done before the Climate Council requires this change in the Comprehensive Plan.

OLD BUSINESS:

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with St. George Community Development Corporation (CDC) - Chair Bates reported that Margot Kelley and Town Manager Polky worked out an MOU agreement and that the MOU had been forwarded to Select Board members.

Chair Bates stated, "In considering this Memorandum of Understanding, I want to go over the wording in the FEMA Policy FP 104-010-03 document; I think the document clearly states the Agency's intent and, I hope, assures the Board that the MOU is appropriate as part of the Town's emergency preparedness - for example, the 'Background' explains:

"Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there may be areas where it will be necessary as an emergency protective measure to provide food to meet the immediate needs of those who do not have access to food as a result of COVID-19 and to protect the public from the spread of the virus.

"In the 'Work Eligibility' Section B2c:

Several indicators may demonstrate the need to purchase and distribute food in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- i. Reduced mobility of people in need due to government-imposed restrictions, including 'stay-at-home' orders, which prevent certain populations from accessing food;*
- ii. Marked increase or atypical demand for feeding resources; or*
- iii. Disruptions to the typical food supply chain within a given jurisdiction.*

"If the Town were ever to invoke the MOU, the St. George CDC would be providing a much different service to the one it does at present."

Chair Bates reiterated his explanation that FEMA's intent is different from what the CDC is doing at present, and the Board needs to separate what the CDC is at the moment from what they might do if the town invoked the MOU. Polky agreed that having an MOU in place would be good in case the town needed it, but there was a good chance it would not be invoked.

Selectperson Hall felt it was also good to have the MOU ready and in place. Selectperson Willey asked if the CDC's guidelines would change on who received the assistance. Polky stated FEMA guidelines would have to be followed, so the CDC would have to change some of their procedures.

A motion was made by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell for the St. George Select Board to authorize Town Manager Tim Polky to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with the St. George Community Development Corporation (CDC). The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Health Insurance Plans: Terri-Lynn Baines explained why she felt the town should move from PPO-1500 to POS-C. "MMA has seven plans but only allows a town to have three. Currently, the town has POS-A, POS-200, and PPO-1500. No one is enrolled in PPO-1500 and this year the deductible is going up on that plan. It seems like it would be nice to offer a plan that people might take. POS-C is a little better than the POS-200. It has less costs for doctor's visits and I think it would be attractive to people. If the town were to pick up that single cost, it would add \$527 a month. We currently have seven enrolled in POS-A, so they will not change. We have six enrolled in POS-200. They may change; they may not. Three of them are families and that adds an increase to their cost so they may not be willing to do that. I think it does not make sense to carry a plan that nobody is going to use."

Chair Bates asked Baines if \$527 a month was per employee or was that an estimate for all six? Baines said that would be the total increase to the town if everyone decided to take the POS-C. Chair Bates said he liked the idea of improving the health plan for the employees. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to authorize Finance Director Terri Lynn Baines to change the town's health insurance plans by deleting PPO-1500 and including the POS-C as the third plan. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

- Appointment of Anne Cogger as Alternate Member of Planning Board: The Planning Board has a vacant position on the Board as a one-year alternate. Anne Cogger submitted her name to serve as an alternate.

A motion was made by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Willey, to place Anne Cogger's name in nomination to serve as an alternate on the Planning Board. It was voted 5-0 that Anne Cogger be appointed as an alternate to the Planning Board. The motion carried.

- COVID Safety Changes: - Office Manager Tara Elwell explained that coronavirus cases were on the rise. She said if anyone of the office staff got sick, they would most likely have to shut the whole office town for a few weeks, possibly a month, depending on the situation. She said to avoid that and limit contact with each other, the staff proposed splitting up the days they would be in the office at the same time. She said she and Baines would be working opposite shifts, Megan and Patti would work opposite shifts, and Terry Brackett and Beth Smith would be working opposite shifts. Terri-Lynn and Patti would be at the office on Monday and Tuesday; Megan and Tara will work Wednesday and Thursday and then they will alternate Fridays.

Elwell said the staff would do as much of the work from home as they could and would be taking online classes through MMA.

Office Manager Elwell indicated that they have created a schedule through Christmas. She pointed out that the Town Office would not be closed to the public. The public would still be able to come into the building as long as they followed the CDC and governor's guidelines of wearing masks. She said they were also looking into placing a hand sanitizer unit outside by the door.

- Town Office Closure Dates - Tara Elwell explained that due to the coronavirus, many of the office staff did not get to use vacation time this year. She asked the Select Board if they would approve the staff using three vacation days for November 23, 24, and 25th; and then Town Office would be closed for the regular Thanksgiving holidays of November 26 and 27, 2020.

Selectperson Elwell thought it was a good idea given the stress from having to deal with COVID and the Elections. Elwell asked, in fairness, would the Transfer Station be closed? Polky said the Transfer Station could not be closed down. Tara noted that last year, Tim said that it was easier for the transfer station employees to work out their time off schedule but not so easy for the town office. Selectperson Sawyer thought it was a good idea, Willey said whatever they thought was best, and Hall was supportive of the plan.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer to allow the employees to split up their workdays at the town office which will help to ensure their health and safety and the public's health and safety due to the coronavirus, and to close the office for the week of Thanksgiving. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

- Sign the Maine Revenue Service - 2020 Municipal Valuation Return (MVR): Select Board members received a copy of the 2020 MVR for their review.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to approve the Maine Revenue Service - 2020 Municipal Valuation Return for the town of St. George, Maine. The vote was 5-0. Motion carried.

Chair Bates noted that page 8 of the MVR would need to be signed by the Select Board.

- Annual Review of the Select Board Policy Manual: The Select Board reviewed pages 1-37 for changes and updates to the Policy Manual at the October 5, 2020, Select Board meeting, and emailed those changes to the Select Board.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall to accept the changes and updates made to the Select Board Policy Manual at the October 5, 2020. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

The Select Board reviewed the Policy Manual, pages 38 to the end for corrections, changes, and updates. Chair Bates will document the changes and see that the policy manual is updated.

- MCEDD Funding Support in Upcoming County Budget Review: Chair Bates said that on October 22, 2020, there was a meeting of the Midcoast Economic Development District

(MCEDD) Board (he is one of the members) and the County Supervisor, Andrew Hart said there was concern about MCEDD's funding for the coming year.

Town Manager Polky said he did not think the town was getting anything from MCEDD since March and that was because they (the Planning Board) hadn't seen Bill Najpauer and said he did not know that there was a lot of communication going on in the background. Chair Bates said he felt there had been less communication since March and felt that once the pandemic hit, MCEDD was one of the organizations that slowed down. Before March, MCEDD had helped the Planning Board with some ordinance revision and Bill Najpauer was the person who helped work on the Sea Level Rise Resiliency review.

Chair Bates noted that MCEDD helped with the "Keep Maine Healthy" grant program and more recently, MCEDD helped a Port Clyde business get a \$100,000 under the Maine Economic Recovery Grant Program, helped Jackson Memorial Library get a \$100,000 grant in the last couple of weeks, and Tenants Harbor businesses received \$5,984.44 in total.

Chair Bates stated MCEDD was a valuable county-level service and felt in principle, it was a competent service. He noted that this coming year St. George would end up paying approximately \$5,300.00 but felt that was a good investment for an agency which in the long term was good. Chair Bates' request to the Select Board is that a letter is written to Andrew Hart, County Supervisor, stating "please keep county-wide support for MCEDD."

Chair Bates said in their discussion that Hall touched on a key point: If St. George paid MCEDD directly would the town have more sway getting them to listen? The question is then how much that has happened in the last couple of months simply because St. George is just one of many towns in Knox County? Chair Bates said he did not have a good answer to that. He thought Camden and Rockland would continue to support MCEDD even if the smaller towns were not contributing. If St. George were to pay a lump sum and Rockland, Camden and Rockport stayed in, St. George would still be competing with the larger towns. He thought that was always going to be a problem.

Polky said that he agrees with Chair Bates that the concept is great, Najpauer does a great job when he comes, he knows his work, and so does the staff and maybe COVID-19 is their problem. Polky, "But when I was asked if I approved this organization, I had to be honest. I haven't seen anything, but that was when Richard told me about the grants, and I did not know anything about those."

Selectperson Hall said it had been an unusual year and he thought part of what the Select Board said before was that they would evaluate it and see what they thought. He said it was clear that they had done things of benefit so, he would support giving the Select Board a little more time to evaluate the worth.

Chair Bates agreed and felt they should fund them for at least this coming year. Selectperson Willey asked if this was the group that came in to help the Planning Board with rewriting ordinances? Chair Bates said Najpauer was coming every two weeks to Planning Board meetings last fall and the beginning of the year, and then he stopped coming. That was a disappointment. The Chair of the Planning Board has tried to contact Najpauer and he has not

responded. Michael Jordan has been doing a great job, but he is a lawyer and not an expert in Planning Ordinances.

Selectperson Elwell added that was a lot of money to not even get an answer to the questions and he did not think the town should pay that kind of money to go through the county. Polky said that when the town was part of Midcoast Regional Planning, the town was paying money as well and there were times when the town got nothing. Polky, "The amount of money is not that much. What Bill was doing for us when he showed up, it is worth a lot more than that."

Selectperson Hall thought the reason the Select Board said they wanted to do this, to begin with, was valid. Hall, "But something has gone wrong, and the question is can we fix it?"

Chair Bates felt Najpauer had added to the organization but perhaps there had been extra demands placed on him over the last few months. Chair Bates thought they needed to stress to him that he needed to communicate; he needs to respond to emails and phone messages.

The consensus of the Select Board was to have Chair Bates write a letter to Andrew Hart supporting MCEDD for the coming year, and St. George will pay \$5,300 as its share. Chair Bates will also write a letter to Bill Najpauer reminding him that the town is supporting him this year, but that he needs to be more responsive to town officials when they contact him.

Selectperson Willey asked Chair Bates to make sure he let MCEDD and Najpauer know that the Select Board has concerns.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 8:43 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to go into executive session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA sec. 405(6)(E)- consultations with legal counsel. The Select Board came out of executive session at 8:52 p.m.

At 8:53 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary