

## **ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS**

### **St. George Town Office**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

June 7, 2021 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Members present in person were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Tammy Willey, (Wayne Sawyer was absent). Also present in person: Michael and Beth Smith, Van Thompson, Tim Polky, Tara Elwell, and Irene Ames. Present via Zoom: Loreen Meyers and Ken Oelberger.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

#### **REGULAR SESSION:**

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made.

- Property Access Request by Michael and Beth Smith was added and taken up under Regular Session.
- Quitclaim Deed on the Rychling Property was added and taken up under New Business.
- MMA Worker's Compensation Fund or Property and Casualty Pool Programs for Volunteers was added and discussed under New Business.

- Property Access Request: Michael and Beth Smith explained their request. Ms. Smith said 17 years ago, they bought a piece of property abutting Greenfire on Wallston Road. The back piece of property abuts Fogerty Corner Road, which is the old, discontinued Watts Avenue. The Smiths have children who would like to live in St. George but are finding it increasingly difficult to do that, and they would like to access the land which would involve building a new road to the property. The proposed road would be 1,000 feet from the end of the town road to their property, and as this is a town right of way, the Smiths need permission from the town to improve the road to access their property. They are on a waiting list to have the road surveyed, and Ms. Smith presented a hand-drawn map to the Select Board illustrating the road project.

Selectperson Elwell asked if the town discontinued that road. Polky said it is discontinued for maintenance, but the town still has the right of way.

Mr. Smith asked if the town had numbers for the road because controversy could arise about location and did the town have any information on where that road was. Polky said it should be in the road file and the information should be in the file as to when the road was laid out. Ms. Smith said she was looking for the Fogerty Corner information but should have been looking at Watts Avenue as that was the road that got discontinued. Polky believed that was correct. Ms. Smith stated she will give what information she has to the surveyor because they want to make sure the road is in the right place as they are not the only property owners on this road. "We are not planning any sort of a subdivision or anything like that. It is strictly for the family at this point."

Selectperson Elwell, "If that is the only way to access your land, I have no problem with that." Chair Bates noted the legal situation was the town discontinued it for maintenance. Polky noted to restore the road to whole status, it would have to be voted on at a town meeting.

Mr. Smith asked, "If we do all that work, it is still a right of way? People can still come up and down it? To access their land?" Polky, "That is right. The other thing that could happen is if you brought it up to road standards, then the town could take it over."

Chair Bates, "So, you would have had that expense and you would not then be compensated, right?" Polky stated that is right.

Ms. Smith, "I have a feeling that once we do put some sort of passable road in there, those other lots will be more accessible as well. You may find more movement in that area of town, which is a beautiful, wooded area of town."

Polky felt everyone knew where the road right of way was and the Select Board would be giving the Smiths permission to improve the road so that they could use it knowing that it was a town right of way. Selectperson Hall did not see an issue with their request.

Polky stated before the town would take the road over, it would need to be in a lot better shape. "There are road standards in the Select Board's Policy Manual that would have to be met before the town would accept it. However, the town meeting could accept things that were not exactly up to road standards."

The Smiths understand it will be their responsibility to fix, plow, and maintain the road to get to their home.

Selectperson Willey asked as far as the Smiths taking on the road expense, did the town no longer have any liability on the town right of way? Polky, "No."

Ms. Smith said at some point after the road has been surveyed, they would come to the town with that information.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to allow Michael and Beth Smith permission to access their property using the town's right of way on the discontinued road and do what needs to be done by fixing the road to make it more accessible for their use. The vote was 4-0 in favor. The motion carried.

- Minutes: The minutes of May 17, 2021, were corrected as follows:

Page 2 corrections under St. George Fire Engine:

Line 3, change the word a to **the**

Line 5, change to read, Smith explained that **the fire chief is** one of our paramedics **and** lives in Wesley ...

Paragraph 4, line 2, change to read: Their **fire chief and** paramedic

Page 3, under Warrant, paragraph 3 corrections:

Line 3, change to read: ...we are losing money **and** are paying more...

Line 4, change to read: There could be **two** reasons for that.

Line 6, change to: ... the system should have **stabilized by now**.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to approve the May 17, 2021, minutes, as corrected. The vote was 4-0 in favor. The motion carried.

The May 17, 2021, Organization Review Meeting minutes were placed on file.  
The May 20, 2021, and May 24, 2021, Executive Session Meeting minutes were placed on file.

- Communications: Selectperson Hall received an email about 1-2 weeks ago from Fred Carey asking if the town could get more assistance from the sheriff's department regarding speeders and erratic drivers on Route 131. Hall explained to Carey that he understood the sheriff's department was short-staffed and spread thin but gave the town support as they could, and sometimes the town might ask for more. He said he would pass Carey's request along at the next Select Board meeting. Selectperson Hall stated he had personally witnessed almost two head-on crashes from people passing in "crazy" places on Route 131. Selectperson Elwell noted the erratic speeders did not like school bus lights, either. Selectperson Hall, "So, there is a request from one former Select Board member, and I will count as a second. It has been bad, lately."

Chair Bates asked if Polky could speak with the Sheriff's Department. Polky said yes, he did not have a problem talking with them, but from experience, it seemed taxpayers got better results when they called the Sheriff's Office. Polky said the Sheriff's Department had been very busy the last week or so patrolling Route 131, writing tickets.

Chair Bates asked about the school bus issue. Did Elwell have the drivers report the incidences? Selectperson Elwell, "Half the time you are trying to pay attention (to the children) and do not even get the license plate number but when you do, nothing usually happens." Chair Bates thought that was a good reason to call the Sheriff's Office and perhaps Mike Felton could also call them.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of June 7, 2021, was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$154,648.60 and included a payment of \$14,175.00 to Parker Appraisal Company, a payment of \$18,105.34 to the Community Development Corporation (CDC), and other regular expenses.

Tara Elwell explained the \$18,105.34 payment made to the CDC. Elwell worked on and submitted a FEMA grant application for the CDC. The State of Maine awarded FEMA grant money and sent the check to the Town of St. George. The town then mailed a check to the CDC.

Chair Bates noted that Elwell did a lot of work on the application for the CDC. Elwell said the state was good, but it was hard being the middleman. She submitted the CDC paperwork that showed their quarter breakdowns and all of the files for all of the receipts they had. In return, the state was explicit when they wanted certain details and they went back and forth. But Margot Kelley was very quick to respond and came back with the information so she (Elwell) could submit it with the grant. Chair Bates said he was glad the town could help the CDC with this, and Elwell stated the CDC expressed their gratitude for the help.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - Tim Polky reported the following:

-Paving Contract. Prices came back from Hager Enterprises and Performance Paving to do Dennison Road and Martinsville Beach Road. Hager was the low bid at \$198,312.00 and there was only a difference of \$248.00 between the two bids. A decision had to be made, and Polky awarded the bid to Hager who would start the work before October 2021.

- Proposals for Contract Cleaners. Ads have been placed asking for proposal bids to clean the town office. They have not had a cleaner since the pandemic started.

- Proposals on Propane. Ads have been placed asking for bid proposals for propane. Polky said the Board discussed separating the heating oil from the propane gas. The propane would include the gas and generator at the town office, and the fire station on Route 73 will be heated with propane.

- Transfer Station Attendant Ad. An employment ad has been placed seeking a transfer station attendant.

- Mowing Maintenance. An ad seeking proposal bids has been placed for mowing maintenance of Seaside Cemetery.

- Parking for Clark Island Preserve. A meeting was held outside the Craginair Inn about the new activity on Clark Island. They also discussed parking. Polky thought the meeting went well. Polky said the issue was not resolved but it was a good start on the problem. Chair Bates said he and other local people attended the meeting, and Amanda Devine of Maine Coast Heritage Trust ran an inclusive meeting with the people from that area. He thought the number of ideas discussed will help but, in some respects, it is impossible because it is a dead-end road and has limited space; but Devine is determined to do all that she can. Polky noted that people were willing to talk about the situation and were not angry.

- Meeting with Chris Rector and Mark Winter. The Town Manager convened a meeting with a representative from the Harbor Committee, Chris Rector from Senator Angus Kings' office and Mark Winter from Senator Susan Collins, and some select board members. They discussed the EDA grant. Polky thought the meeting went well and both Rector and Winter produced ideas. He said Winter suggested some reasons why they were turned down the first time, but it was sounding more promising at this point. Selectperson Elwell said Rector and Winters wanted to be more involved. Polky said the next time they meet with Musson and Brigham, Rector and Winter want to be part of that meeting and hopefully, the town will get something out of it. Polky said that on Wednesday, Rector told them about a grant that was going to close in five days, and the staff did a lot of work to get the application submitted.

- Alisa Beal Contract for Secondhand Shop. Beal agreed to a three-year contract for the same amount as her last contract.

A motion was made by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, to approve Alisa Beal's three-year contract to run a secondhand shop at the Transfer Station at the same amount as her last contract. The vote was 4-0 in favor.

- Jamie Miller Contract for Roadside Mowing. Polky talked with Miller about the mowing contract. Miller has been having some health issues and would like to continue mowing but did not want a contract for more than one year, at this point. Polky wrote a one-year contract with Miller.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to approve Jamie Miller's one-year mowing maintenance contract for \$2,150.00. The vote was 4-0 in favor.

Selectperson Elwell asked Polky how the culvert was coming along on Drift Inn Beach Road in the marsh area. Polky said something will need to be done there and added that Bill Lane from Gartley & Dorsky has the engineering plan done. He said the town had a similar chance to apply for another grant but due to the closing date, did not have time to get it together. Polky thinks other grants will become available in the future.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cemetery Committee: Selectperson Hall reported the Cemetery Committee met on May 26, 2021. They asked Hall to talk with the Select Board as they had been waiting for quite some time for a legal review and would like to have this issue resolved. Polky said he would call Mary Costigan of Bernstein, Shur on Tuesday.

Two other items were discussed. Did the committee want to get involved in finding a new Sexton and someone to mow the Seaside Cemetery? The group concluded they were an advisory committee and it appeared that an RFP for mowing and maintenance had been done.

Selectperson Hall said comment was made that there might be more than one person interested in being a Sexton. Polky said he knew of at least two people interested and he felt the town should advertise for that position. Polky reported Ray Emerson was trying to step down from most of his town activities as he planned to be away more during the winter months. Polky said they had not advertised for that position as Emerson would be at the job until the end of October and they felt once the new town manager was hired, that would be time to advertise.

The other question that came up was whether the Clark's Hill Cemetery or the area around the Clark's Hill Cemetery had been tax acquired by the town. Polky stated it was, they were trying to get the quitclaim deed, and that was part of the legal review the committee was waiting for. Polky said they were trying to establish what the town's boundary was and to make a deal to settle the tax acquired situation with the previous owner or the occupant. Polky said they were trying to legally clean up the issue so the town could legally own the cemetery.

- CDC Connect St. George Committee: Selectperson Hall reported the grant the committee applied for was successful, and ConnectME would provide \$104,000 plus towards the build-out of the Spectrum system in St. George. He said Spectrum was contributing \$271,000, the grant would be \$104,000 plus, the CDC had \$8,000 to apply towards it, and the town would contribute \$10,000 which left about \$45,000+ to be raised by civic-minded townspeople; some who would benefit from it and some who would not but would be interested in helping everyone have connectivity.

Selectperson Hall explained the view of the committee. This should build out the system to all the remaining people who do not have it. There are likely to be some questions on details about long drops and those will need to be looked at on a case-by-case basis as the build-out progresses. There is an organizational meeting on June 23, 2021, via Zoom for the successful grant applicants. This is a workshop for people to be briefed on how the build-out works, what people need to do, etc.

Selectperson Hall, "I cannot say enough about the work the members of the committee did to do the audit of the service in the town, to run down the details, establish who was served and who

was not, and the writing of the grant application. My kudos to the committee for the work they did." Chair Bates agreed and said the committee did a great job.

- Solid Waste and Recycling Committee (SW&RC): Selectperson Willey reported the SW&RC met on May 19, 2021. The spring roadside clean-up week was disorganized this year and they hope it will run smoother next year and be back to normal.

Members are planning a workday at the Transfer Station on June 19, 2021, at 10 a.m. They will clean up areas around the Transfer Station. Selectperson Willey did not know who will be in charge, as the committee did not say. Polky said Ben from the Transfer Station attended the committee meeting, and he thinks Ben might help direct the volunteers if he has time.

Polky reported the new compost was tested and approved for sale. It is \$2.00 a bag. Willey said Polky talked to the committee about the shingles and the issues related to recycling those. After a lengthy discussion between the committee and Polky and trying to decide what to do with the shingles, they decided to revisit this in the future. Since there is no market to recycle the shingles, it is costing the town extra money. So, for the time being, the Transfer Station will take the shingles, but not recycle them. They will be disposed of in the regular, open-top demo containers.

Polky said they will continue taking glass. They can crush it up and use it for inert fill. The workers will put up some Jersey barriers (where the can is for the glass) and try to crush it up with the excavator and then dump it. Polky thinks it is doable.

Selectperson Willey said the committee again discussed holding a shredding event. They have two other groups who have agreed to help with the cost and that should lower the cost for the town. More to come on when the plans have been coordinated.

The recycling rate was discussed. The rate is down, and the committee cannot figure out how to encourage residents to get more involved in recycling. They talked about events and things they could do.

Chair Bates, "One of the significant factors with the weight of things like shingles, and if they take out those things we are no longer dealing with because they are uneconomical, as far as the recycling rates for plastics, paper, and cardboard, has that changed appreciably in the last five years?" Polky said yes. There are more of those items going into the hopper than there have been in a long time.

Chair Bates, "So, there is a real problem of reduced, recycling those sorts of material."

Polky, "One of the things they did, they shipped a load of plastic last week and the buyer was looking for the Number 2 colored (town got \$600 a ton) and the Number 2 natural (the town got \$800 a ton). They also took the town's Number 1 plastic which is something we have not been able to sell for a long time and they took the 3-7 plastic. Twenty tons were shipped, so the town should see a couple of thousand dollars."

Polky suggested to the Transfer Station employees that they put a sign up that says, "This is what we got for these milk containers." He said instead of sending it to Norridgewock for a cost of

\$200 a ton, the town can sell it for \$600 a ton, and they will come to get it. "Put up a sign and maybe some people will realize that some of the recycling still works." Selectperson Willey said the committee has suggestions and good ideas, but she thinks many members are involved in other things right now and it is hard to start something and complete it.

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported the Conservation Commission (CC) met on June 7, 2021, at 4 p.m. They have started their summer trail clean up and each Thursday they have a small group to work on different trails. Their next clean-up day is June 17, 2021. For more information, go to the town website, Boards & Committees, and search under Conservation Commission.

The CC is working on the permits for the bridge at Fort Point Trail, and they have received grants related to that.

The CC is holding educational programs and recording the programs on Zoom. Those programs can be accessed on the town's website, Boards & Committees, and search Conservation Commission, Education.

Invasive plants were discussed. Amanda Devine from the Maine Coast Heritage Trust attended the meeting to discuss Clark Island and referred to Clark Island as an "invasive horror show." There appears to be a great deal of bittersweet in that area which has taken hold of a lot of the native plants and trees. They are trying to eradicate it, but Devine said they will probably have to bring in some industrial equipment for that. Devine said they will not be working within any Shoreland Zone this year, but they are keeping in touch with CEO Brackett so there will not be any problems going forward.

The CC updated their web page on Solar Power and is encouraging people to look at this site.

Joss Coggeshall announced he will be retiring from the Conservation Commission, but he will continue to be involved in trail cleanups, the Alewife program, and other special projects.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met in person on May 25, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

- The application to install three seasonal luxury tents at 162 Drift Inn Road was reviewed and a public on-site visit was arranged for 5:00 pm Monday, June 14.
- The application to replace the "Crow's Nest" cabin at 22 Blueberry Cove Road was accepted as complete; an on-site visit was not considered necessary as it is essentially a replacement structure and also not visible by neighboring properties. The Board determined that the project satisfied all the Performance Standards in the Site Plan Review, and thus it was approved, with certain minor conditions.
- The application to extend the 30' boardwalk at 105 Long Cove Road (Bamford Preserve) by an additional 30' 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 build a new boat ramp on Mosquito Island was reviewed. The Board decided to table this application until the DEP has approved the design.
- A minor revision to the footprint of an earlier permitted project (7/28/2020) at 50 Shipyard Road was approved.
- There was a pre-application discussion about a proposal to create an event center (weddings, meetings, etc.) off Mussel Farm Road and Rt. 131; the Board was concerned by the potential noise and traffic that would result from the proposal.

- Sea Level Rise Committee: Chair Bates reported the Sea Level Rise Committee (SLR) had good news. In January 2020, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute asked St. George if they would participate in a grant application to NOAA. Chair Bates noted NOAA's Environmental Literacy Program grant is called Community Resilience Informed by Science and Experience (C-RISE). He said the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) has been awarded the grant, and St. George will be a prototype community to run some events in the fall of 2021 to help rural communities plan and prepare for a resilient future. The town will receive \$2,500 and more information will be provided by the GMRI.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- Select Board Meeting Schedule: The Select Board reviewed the revised meeting schedule for the year, and there were no changes made to this schedule.

- "An Act Regarding Remote Participation in Public Proceedings" – LD32: Chair Bates read the following, "Local leaders interested in retaining remote meeting authority in perpetuity are encouraged to contact their members of the House and Senate to support the bill." He thinks this is a useful tool for the town to have, especially for those who have long distances to travel or if members of Boards are traveling. Chair Bates asked the Board's permission to write to Rep. Ann Matlack and Sen. David Miramant urging them to support this bill. He feels it has proven that it can work fine. The Select Board agreed to have Chair Bates write the letter on behalf of the Select Board.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- Board of Appeals and Planning Board Appointments: Jane Conrad volunteered to be an alternate on the Board of Appeals and Chairperson Steve Miller was pleased to have Conrad volunteer. Van Thompson volunteered to be an alternate to the Planning Board and Chair Anne Cox was pleased to have Thompson volunteer.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell and seconded by Hall to accept the appointment of Jane Conrad as an alternate on the Board of Appeals and to accept the appointment of Van Thompson as an alternate member on the Planning Board. The vote was 4-0 in favor.

- Special Town Meeting – Land Purchase: Town Manager Polky said they are trying to purchase a piece of property located next to the Transfer Station owned by Brian Fields. He said they set the price, thought they had a deal with Fields and had been discussing a down payment and making payments if they could go that route. Polky said he received an email from Fields yesterday saying he had a similar property under contract for \$125,000 and was a lot more than



what the town offered him for the property in question. Fields asked if the town wanted to purchase it for that amount.

Polky thinks this is a piece of property the town should try to acquire but feels the town did not want to pay more than what the property is worth. So, they are back to negotiating, and there will not be a special town meeting at this time. Chair Bates noted the assessed value of the property is \$61,000. Polky said Fields wanted him to take this to the Select Board to see if they were interested in purchasing it for \$125,000. The consensus of the Board was to continue to negotiate with Mr. Fields.

- Liquor License Application: Black Harpoon, LLC – Tara Elwell presented a liquor license application to the Select Board. The Black Harpoon's liquor license expired in April 2021. The owner, Emily Chadwick, came in late to apply, as she thought everything had been pushed back due to COVID-19. Because it was a rush to get the license, she had to ask the Town Manager for special permission to operate. The Black Harpoon does not need a public hearing as they have been operating their business for over five years without any incidents reported.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall to approve the Black Harpoon, LLC liquor license. The vote was 4-0 in favor, and the Select Board signed the application.

- Victualer Licenses: On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey, it was voted 4-0 to approve the following victualers licenses:

- Darci Morris-Chickering, d/b/a The Sugar Tree
- Malcolm Bedell, d/b/a Ancho-Honey
- Robert Skoglund, d/b/a The Humble Farmer

- Knox County Budget: The Select Board discussed the County budget decrease. Chair Bates reported that the town's share of the County budget did not go down. He thought this was interesting because the County budget went up two percent, so why was the town paying less even though the budget went up? Chair Bates explained the relative value compared to other municipalities has fallen. It all goes back to having a re-valuation and then a slump. But now things are getting back on to a more even keel. So, when people ask why the County budget has gone up but the amount we are paying has dropped by \$67,425, it is because relative to other towns, our valuation has dropped.

Tara Elwell clarified that the tax amount is \$941,739.47 and the \$84,903.00 is for the town's portion of dispatch services. She explained the county number is based on the valuation and that dropped by 6%. Dispatch is based on population and that has not changed much. The Select Board signed the Knox County budget.

- Quitclaim Deed: Tara Elwell presented a quitclaim deed to the Select Board. The property of Gary and Gladys Rychling, Map 207, Lot 017, was tax acquired by the town. The lien was for \$66.00 (2018 taxes) and Todd Rychling paid off the lien amount. The Board signed the quitclaim deed.

- Insurance to Board and Committee Members: Select Board members received a handout on the Maine Municipal Association's Workers Compensation Fund or Property and Casualty Pool

programs. Volunteers of a member municipality/entity participating in those programs are eligible.

Chair Bates explained the program. The premium would be \$2.00 per person per committee member and the town would pay this expense. St. George had eleven (11) Committees and Boards totaling seventy-seven (77) volunteers and the total premium for the year would be \$154.00. Members on these committees would have accidental medical expense and accidental death and dismemberment coverage.

Chair Bates, "Is this something the Board thinks the town should be providing to volunteers who help the town on their committees and their boards? \$154 a year does not seem like much but is it an unnecessary expense for the town?" Selectperson Elwell asked if it might increase the number of people to volunteer on committees. Polky thought this item came from some municipalities that were trying to encourage people to volunteer for committees.

Polky said they do provide this type of coverage for the town's firefighters and ambulance attendants, responding to calls because prior to that, they were not covered. Selectperson Elwell suggested they take this issue to their respective committees and ask the volunteer members what they think. The consensus of the Select Board was to give some thought to this issue, bring it back for discussion, and take a vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 8:21 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-0 to go into executive session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA Sec. 405(6)(A) to discuss personnel matters. The Select Board came out of executive session at 8:40 p.m.

At 8:41 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson  
Select Board Recording Secretary