

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

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

### **MEETING MINUTES**

August 23, 2021 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Members present in person were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present in person: Richard Erb, Irene Ames, and Van Thompson. Present via Zoom were: Ken Oelberger, Loreen Meyer, Jeff Boulet, Alane Kennedy, and Robert Kelley.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

#### **REGULAR SESSION:**

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- The Midcoast Internet Coalition and the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation Discussion Item was moved from Old Business and taken up under Regular Session.
- Options for the American Rescue Plan Funds was moved from New Business and taken up under Regular Session.
- The Fort Point Quitclaim Deed was added to the agenda and taken up under Regular Session.

- The Midcoast Internet Coalition and the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation: Selectperson Hall and Jeff Boulet reported on this agenda item. Selectperson Hall felt the town should remain informed about the Midcoast Internet Coalition and the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation and what possibilities exist.

Boulet explained that the Midcoast Internet Coalition (MIC) and the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation are two different entities. The MIC is a grassroots organization. It is a voluntary coalition of towns and a place where people share resources. They hold monthly meetings and discuss different broadband projects that are taking place in the community.

Boulet said his experience with the organization was having a phone call with Matt Siegel, vice-chair of the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation. They discussed the St. George broadband project and how the broadband group was working with the St. George Community Development Corporation (CDC). He stated that Siegel had given him some advice on working with Spectrum. Boulet said his experience with MIC was a short conversation but very helpful.

Boulet said the MIC was basically educational and there had been zero risks being part of that coalition; it was a little more difficult to become part of the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation. Boulet noted that only Rockport and Camden were part of the coalition, at this time. Boulet said, "I can see that it may be valuable down the road, but I think that is putting the cart before the horse. Not necessary but definitely keep our finger on the pulse of what is happening with that organization."

Chair Bates reiterated there was no financial commitment for St. George if they joined the MIC. He noted they were a grassroots organization where you shared experiences and shared advice.

Selectperson Hall thought the other question was, "Are we going to join? Who is the representative going to be?" He thought Boulet was probably in the best position to understand what the MIC and Midcoast Internet Development Corporation would be talking about, but the question was whether or not the time commitment was manageable. Chair Bates thought Boulet would be an excellent person to be on the committee, but it was a time commitment. Boulet said he needed to investigate the time commitment.

Boulet said their meetings were held on the second Tuesday of each month and the meeting lasted approximately two hours. He noted that quite a few people attend and that his role might be to just listen to what other communities were doing.

Chair Bates said he reviewed MIC website and noticed each town were usually listed two names for the coalition. One was the town manager and the other, a representative. Town Manager Erb agreed to be on the coalition. Boulet said he would check the time commitment and get back to the Select Board. Select Board members thanked Boulet for all the work he had done on this project.

- Options for the American Rescue Plan Act: Town Manager Erb said St. George would receive one-half of \$273,000 under the American Rescue Plan Act, probably in September, and that amount was about one-half of the total funding anticipated from the ARPA. He explained that every town in Maine would receive a share of funds under the ARPA.

Maine counties already received their funding and plan to use it for their projects or purposes, Erb said, but Knox County was looking to share a portion of the funding with the municipalities. He said he was appreciative that Knox County was approaching it in that way.

Erb: "I think they already have in-hand one-half of the 7.7 million dollars. That is a substantial amount of money. But when you figure a good portion of that will be used for county purposes then take the number of municipalities and nonprofits that are in the county, it is not going to go as far as you might like to think." Erb said Knox County was asking for proposals and those would be due at the end of this week.

Erb said he reviewed the allowable funding categories in the ARPA and thought some of the categories would fit the CDC better than the town as the town did not have the infrastructure to sponsor those types of programs. Erb said he has had conversations with Rob Kelley of the St. George CDC, and the CDC was interested in putting in a request.

Some of the suggested Town categories were:

- The Burn Building. Erb noted there had been talk about putting in a proposal for the Burn Building. But he thought the problem with the Burn Building was that the project had already been built, and Knox County were not interested in paying for projects that had already happened with debt service on them.

- The Ambulance Service. Erb said the ambulance service had shown interest in the funding and he would be meeting with EMS Director Amy Drinkwater tomorrow.

- St. George MSU. Erb talked with Superintendent Mike Felton regarding the school and he was not certain if the school would be putting in a request, but they were considering it.

- Energy Conservation. Erb said one of the items discussed was an appeal to use funds for ongoing savings such as energy conservation. "The windows in the older part of the town office building are in bad shape." Erb said he talked with Mike Smith and Smith was helping him put together cost estimates for window replacement. "We do not have a lot of time to work on this, but I am really interested if people have thoughts on that. It seemed like a project that would probably appeal to just about everyone."

Chair Bates asked Rob Kelley for his input.

Kelley: It is still a little vague about exactly how the distribution works. It appears from the application from Knox County that municipalities and nonprofits can go directly to them, and it is our assumption that there is a distribution category called "Assistance to Nonprofits." It is our assumption that is how the money comes out, but we understand that the money already is categorized by eligible projects.

Kelley: In the U.S. Treasury Guidance section regarding what kinds of projects you could propose and would be able to record against, we are considering a number of areas:

- The Household Assistance Food programs. We will definitely make a plea for funding for the Community Cupboard.
- Housing Assistance, Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid. That is a part of what we use our emergency funds for. Often, we are paying energy costs for someone who can't afford rent, etc.
- Testing (under the Health Care section). This may be a little tougher to justify but we like it. Do we do naloxone training and some of the other things we talked about doing before the pandemic? It is worth asking.

To Erb's point, the money is there. It might go fast but if you don't ask, it is not going to happen, and we have been surprised by other recovery monies that went unused. As you may recall in the 2020 budget, we had petitioned the town to support a housing study, but the pandemic basically shut that all down. We did not reapply in 2021, as we were not sure where that was going to go.

- Joint Housing Trust. There has been some discussion among multiple Midcoast communities about doing a joint housing trust similar to the one that Mt. Desert Island has. So, we are looking at whether or not we can essentially propose a startup "investigation" project which is allowable under the rules that U.S. Treasury has.
- Broadband. We have in hand, a sample contract from Spectrum. I know that Boulet spoke to them today about beginning to negotiate down some of the specific terms. We have a gap in the funding that we are going to need to raise in the community and it

would be great to get a little help with that, so we do not have to raise as much from individual donations.

Chair Bates said he was glad Kelley mentioned the joint affordable housing study that the CDC and town were looking at in 2020. Bates wondered if the 2020 proposal could be revived, and they apply for funding jointly.

Selectperson Hall said he liked the idea of picking things that were discreet projects rather than helping fund something that ran on a continuing basis. He noted that the Select Board had been concerned about how much it would cost to do a housing study, and this might be an opportunity to get funding. Kelley said the study was \$10,000 in total with \$5,000 appropriated by the town and \$5,000 from the CDC.

Kelley explained that housing studies were expensive to do. He said there had been a lot of negotiating with the consultant and thought they negotiated it down to \$10,500. Kelley said he had been in contact with the consultant earlier this summer about the study. She reviewed her costs and since some things had changed with the labor, prices, etc., it would be in the \$11,000 range.

Chair Bates asked if Selectperson Hall could work with Rob Kelley and Alane Kennedy on the housing study this week. Hall said he would try. Kelley said he could not speak definitively but from what he had read it looked like individual organizations applied individually, so he was not sure there was a provision in the application to apply jointly. Kelley, "If they (CDC) applied and basically said this is in collaboration with the town of St. George. That is incredibly valuable."

Chair Bates suggested the Select Board include a letter of endorsement from the town to the Community Development Corporation once the Board received a list of their proposal areas. Kelley thanked the Board for their support. Kelley noted they had until Tuesday but would try to turn the (draft) list in as quickly as possible.

Kelley: If I may, one last thing. I want to make sure this does not conflict with the town. I did skip one on my list which is that our housing committee has recently launched a home improvement program. A very light-type of labor particularly for doing things like installing grab bars and home safety. We would do as small projects, but it also has an energy component.

Kelley said he wanted to make sure that any proposals they apply for that have an energy assistance component would be for residents in the community and would not conflict with what the town is looking for in terms of that window replacement.

Erb: "I don't see those competing with each other. They are different projects." Bates agreed.

- Fort Point Quitclaim Deed: Ken Oelberger said his understanding was that once the lawyer prepared the quitclaim deed it would have to come before the Select Board for approval then the Conservation Commission (CC) could take it to the abutters for signing. Erb stated that was his understanding and had hoped to have had the deed for this meeting, but the lawyer said it was not yet ready. He anticipated it would be ready by the next Select Board meeting.

Oelberger reported that the abutters did not want to sign the documents until they saw where the pins would go on the property, and Gartley & Dorsky said they could not put the pins in until the deeds were signed. Oelberger asked Tom Gorrill to talk with Gartley & Dorsky to see if they could put in some wooden stakes where the eventual pins would go. The CC could then meet with the abutters to sign the documents. He hoped that was a solution. He said the CC had not yet heard back from Gartley & Dorsky about this.

Oelberger did not believe this would hold up the grant proposal because they had the boundary survey, and the property line documents.

- Minutes: The minutes of August 9, 2021, were corrected as follows:

Page 1, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph up, line 5, change to read: ...and I use **the** term advisedly, **contaminated** with school information.

Page 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph up, line 2, change to read: ... purposes **for** management?

Page 2, paragraph 2, lines 3 & 4, change to read: ... according to the Charter. **And** the School Administrative ordinance in the town of St. George deals **with it as** separate governance.

Page 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph up, line 1, correct work governing to **governance**

Page 5, under Communications, 1<sup>st</sup> bullet, line 2, insert after the date July 12, 2021, **and June 21, 2021**

Page 6, under Solid Waste, paragraph 5, line 1, change the second he to **Caron**

Page 7, under Remote Participation Policy, paragraph 2, line 1, change to read: **During the Public Hearing**, a letter was **read** from Loreen Meyer stating **that** she was in favor of **the** policy. (Then delete the rest of sentence.)

Page 7, under Policy for Timely Payments, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, line 2 correct rewritten to **written**

Page 8, under Quitclaim Deed, lines 2 & 3, change to read: .....Laurence Oliveri **agreed** to pay the town \$2,000 for the property. **Legal fees for** the town were \$175. (Then delete rest of this sentence.)

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to approve the August 9, 2021, minutes, as corrected. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor.

- Communications:

Selectperson Sawyer reported he attended a gathering on August 8, 2021, and after a few hours, many of the people wanted to talk with him about the Transfer Station. One complaint was that many vehicles were going to the Transfer Station without stickers, and he was asked how that was enforced. Another complaint was having cars parked in front of the recycling area windows and nobody near the vehicle. Another complaint was the large pile of rigid plastic at the Transfer Station. Sawyer explained that he would take these issues to the Select Board for discussion.

Selectperson Elwell said he also received complaints about garbage that blows around and ends up in the bushes at the Transfer Station or across the road. The question posed to him was, "Why couldn't one of the employees take a garbage bag and pick up the blown trash?"

Erb said this was a very challenging time of year (for staff) because of the increased number of people using the Transfer Station. Selectperson Sawyer said he did not how you deal with

people not using stickers on their vehicles. Were they guests in the area? Were they renters? Chair Bates thought it was more likely people who were here for the summer months. Sawyer asked if a gentle reminder could be made that, "The sticker is free. Go to the town office and pick one up." Elwell asked if Transfer Station employees could issue stickers there if someone did not have one. Erb said he would see what he could do.

Chair Bates did not know what could be done about the parking issue in front of the recycling area. Selectperson Willey thought a lot of people walk off and socialize, or go to the Second-Hand Shop to look around.

Selectperson Elwell said vehicles bottleneck in front of the pile of rigid plastic. He wondered if the rigid plastic could be put in a different area.

One other complaint reported to Selectperson Sawyer was the way people recycle. It appears people sort their recyclables at the windows rather than sorting them at home, beforehand.

Selectperson Hall asked if there were any complaints about the Transfer Station being closed on Thursdays. Selectperson Sawyer said there were no complaints about that. Selectperson Hall asked if they were planning to be open on Thursdays. Chair Bates said Thursday closings came about with COVID and to allow the staff time to handle the recycling and trash. Selectperson Elwell thought the extra day a week closure was to keep the employees at a 40 hour work week.

Selectpersons Elwell and Sawyer had not heard any complaints about the Transfer Station being closed on Thursdays, but Selectperson Hall said he would like it to be open on Thursdays. Chair Bates said the change would depend on hiring another part-time employee.

Selectpersons Sawyer and Elwell thought the Transfer Station was a focal point for socialization. Selectperson Sawyer, "Not everyone goes into the town office. Not everybody goes to 10 Cold Storage Road but most everybody goes to the Transfer Station."

Cell Coverage Mapping, LLC: Chair Bates received a letter from CCM. He said the company looks for dead zones in wireless systems. CCM is currently looking in Knox County for dead zones and looking for citizen input. CCM's website is: [www.cellcoveragemapping.com](http://www.cellcoveragemapping.com)

"Designate areas where you experience no coverage, or poor coverage, with your current cell phone provider.

**REPORT A DEAD ZONE**

CCM thanks you for your participation in this survey.

If you wish to request survey results and/or updates, please [contact us](#)."

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of August 23, 2021, was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$605,301.03 and included a school payment of \$462,695.62, a payment of \$84,903.00 to Knox County for Fire Department Dispatch, a payment of \$3650.00 for maintenance equipment at the Transfer Station, and other regular expenses.

Selectperson Hall asked about the numerous charges to Quill Corp. Ames said that was the office supply company the town uses. Chair Bates said he noticed there were many boxes in the basement. He said he went through boxes and boxes of stationery and items like that, so perhaps the town did a large order. Erb said that where he worked before, office supplies were something you bought in bulk.

Selectperson Hall: The question is not whether or not we needed the supplies. I don't recall ever seeing it printed out like this.

Ames: Yes, this is unusual. That stood out to me as well when I saw it. I know that Patty orders from Quill to buy supplies. Typically, she takes care of the supply inventory every day.

Selectperson Hall asked about the equipment maintenance expense under the Transfer Station. Erb said that expense was replacement tires for the bobcat, and they went with a more expensive tire. They thought it would last substantially longer and be cheaper in the long run, but they would not know for sure until they got through a year.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - Richard Erb reported the following:

Road Paving. Erb was in touch with Hagar Enterprises, Inc who indicated road work would start late August or mid-September. The plan is to do two miles on Dennison Road and a little over a one-half mile on Mosquito Head Road.

Letter from MDOT. He received a letter from MDOT which said in 2022, 4.3 miles overlay on Rt. 131 from Factory Road, north.

Seaside Cemetery. Ray Emerson is getting done as sexton for Seaside Cemetery and the town is taking letters of interest for that appointment.

Board of Appeals. There was a discussion at the Board of Appeals meeting last week, to have one of the town attorneys come in and discuss changes in the law that have occurred. It was suggested the Planning Board join the Appeals Board for that meeting. The plan is to hold that workshop in September. Erb has recommended Board members have their questions ready prior to that meeting. If any Select Board members are interested, they are welcome to attend.

10 Cold Storage Road. The Harbor Committee has been working with Noel Musson. The 10 Cold Storage Road funding application is ready to go and will soon be re-submitted. The committee was hoping that Alan Brigham from EDA could take one more look at it before they re-submit it. Erb said he really would like Brigham's input, if possible, but the committee is eager to get it resubmitted.

Chair Bates asked Town Manager Erb to extend a thank you to the staff for putting the town report together and getting it out.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Solid Waste and Recycling Committee: Selectperson Willey reported the Solid Waste & Recycling Committee (SW&RC) met on August 18 at 7:30 a.m. and discussed the ongoing issue of

recycling and what was going on at the Transfer Station as a result of the increased traffic. SW&RC committee members had offered to go to the Transfer Station and help out. For example, for those interested, discuss recycling, how it works in St. George, where things need to be placed, or whatever they can do to help free up the employees for other work.

They discussed how much rigid plastic there is at the Transfer Station. They are trying to bale it as quickly as they can, but hard plastic has a memory, takes a long time to compact down into a bale, and if they do not get it tight, it will spring back. This is going to be an ongoing issue until companies start taking the rigid plastic again.

The SW&RC had a meeting with Representative Ann Matlack who discussed Maine's Product Stewardship Program and how it would work in the state. Selectperson Willey said there were a lot of details to work out in the next couple of years. Wendy Carr, Chair of the SW&RC, said she was going to try and be involved in this program to see how she could help, and how it might benefit St. George.

Chair Bates asked about the baling of the rigid plastic. He thought the town had the right machinery but were the metal bands around the plastic the issue? Did the town need to get different banding?

Selectperson Willey: They put it in the compactor, and it has to sit there a lot longer than #3 plastics, or milk jugs which can be compacted, banded, and put aside. But the rigid plastic has to stay in that compression so much longer; it takes a long time to set the memory.

Chair Bates: Is the only solution is to get more balers?

Erb: It is probably mostly a summer issue when the town gets such heavy volume coming in. I don't think they can keep up. And you are probably right about the amount of time it has to sit.

Chair Bates: If they cannot clear the solid plastic mountain by the winter then it tells us we have a problem and to see about getting more equipment.

Erb: The other thing I would like to do is talk to Ben to see if our staffing levels are contributing to that problem at all. Are there fewer people to operate the baler? Let me find out.

Selectperson Willey said they did discuss stickers at their meeting. Carr asked Ben if there was something that they could put at the Transfer Station, but he did not think it was a good idea because it would be too time-consuming for the transfer station staff. He thought it was better to keep all the information consolidated in one area at the town office.

Ben said a lot of people do come in with a sticker. It is not necessarily on their windshield. It may be in a little plastic sleeve or whatever.

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported the Conservation Committee (CC) had their public meeting on August 19 at 7:00 p.m. Not many attended but those who did attend were excited about what was going on. To get more information regarding the meeting, go to the town



website and click on the Conversation Committee page. All the information such as fact sheets, the slide show, and their discussions have been posted.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met on August 10, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

- The application to rehabilitate the existing Fort Point trail, to make it sustainable, to meet federal standards for Universal Access, and to replace the bridge crossing the School House Brook, was accepted as complete. The Board determined that it satisfied all the Performance Standards in the Site Plan Review, and the application was approved, subject to receiving the necessary DEP, Army Corps, and wetland permits.
- The application to remove the existing boat ramp, stabilize the shoreline, and construct a new boat ramp on Mosquito Island was accepted as complete. With the Army Corps and DEP permits in hand and satisfying the standards of Section 15C and 16D in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, the application was approved.

Selectperson Willey asked about Fort Point Trail and Universal Access: I thought that was the whole crux of this problem that the abutters and all involved at Wiley's Corner didn't want Universal Access. They didn't want that wide trail down through there.

Selectperson Hall: There was concern about a big, wide trail but it is three feet wide which would prevent motorized vehicles like snowmobiles or four-wheelers going on it. There was a concern about increased use but a bulk of the complaints were not so much about the trail as the issue with people parking there or people wandering into Laurie's dooryard. Laurie is on board with what the CC is proposing to do. There were some other comments. For instance, if you have increased traffic there, you might drive the foxes that have the kits away.

Chair Bates noted that the grant application would include Universal Access.

OLD BUSINESS: The Midcoast Internet Coalition was taken up under Regular Session.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Permit Application for a Catered Function: Finance Director Ames presented a permit application request to cater a wedding for 50 people on September 25, 2021, from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Blueberry Cove in Tenants Harbor.

A motion was made by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, to approve the permit application to hold a catered function on September 25, 2021, at Blueberry Cove, Tenants Harbor. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor.

Selectperson Willey reported that the open house at the Robinson Homestead with the St. George Historical Society (SGHS) was a complete success, and it was fabulous. They had 163 visitors and she recommended that people take the tour. Selectperson Hall said the SGHS did an incredible job.

There being no further business, at 8:15 p.m., the Select Board meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson  
Select Board Recording Secretary