

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS
St. George Town Office
MEETING MINUTES
February 7, 2022 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Members present by Zoom were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present by Zoom: Richard Erb, Irene Ames, Amy Drinkwater, Richard Cohen, Dave Percival, Chris Williamson, Ken Oelberger, Elizabeth May, Scott Vaitones, Susy Ellis, Ben Vail, Michael Smith, and Van Thompson.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda - The following adjustments were made:

- The Budget Committee's Budgetary Concerns was moved from New Business and taken up under Regular Session.
- Review of FY'23 Proposed Town Budget – Part 1 was moved from New Business and taken up under Regular Session.
- Meeting in Person Starting in March was added to the agenda under New Business.

- Budget Committee Budgetary Concerns: The Budget Committee sent a list of their concerns, questions, and ideas to the Select Board for review. The Select Board discussed the list.

1. St. George Municipal School Unit. The Budget Committee indicated this was the largest portion of the town budget. Question: To keep abreast of what was happening at the school, should there be a Select Board liaison to the School Board?

Selectpersons Sawyer and Willey thought it was a good idea to have a liaison, and Selectperson Hall thought it would be beneficial. Chair Bates noted there would be an election for two Select Board seats in May and suggested this idea be kept on the list and be revisited after the Select Board did their reorganization in May.

2. The Ambulance and Fire Department. Question: What measures have been taken to attract new volunteers and how will the issues of increased stipends affect the budget? Chair Bates said the Ambulance and Fire Department was always looking for new recruits, and there was a need to increase stipends in those departments.

Selectperson Elwell commented on the issue of attracting new volunteers: I think stipends will help but even more stipends may not do it. It is a nationwide issue. I think it's people's lack of volunteering and getting involved. There have not been any fires and people lose interest. But we now have the Burn building to train people (firefighters) and that will be a big help.

Amy Drinkwater commented on the issue of the Ambulance and attracting new volunteers: It is not just in this area, it is everywhere. The newspapers always have openings for EMS and Fire Department employees. It is volunteerism. When you look at the Ambulance budget for the coming year, we have an increase to pay at nighttime, so we can (hopefully) retain people here in St. George and keep them from burning out. People are short-handed everywhere. It is going to affect budgets in every town.

3. The Jackson Memorial Library. Question: Why the cost, salary, and benefits for the school when they have a full-time, certified librarian? Chair Bates suggested a Budget Committee member talk with Michael Felton or Cassie Kilbride to get the answer.

Selectperson Elwell thought, by law, the school had to retain a librarian. Williamson said it was his understanding, that it was more of a consulting position. Ellis volunteered to call Kilbride to find out the present and past costs. Chair Bates said if the library took on more services for the school, it would be good to have those numbers.

4. Town Employees and the Effect Inflation Will Have on Salaries and Benefits. Question: Could ARPA funding be used to help with salaries and benefits? Chair Bates stated they now know what to use the ARPA funds for, but they have the challenge of how to retain employees without making too onerous commitments for the long-term. He noted this was an issue Town Manager Erb had been wrestling with in preparing the budget.

Ellis said the thought of the Budget Committee was to use ARPA funds as a bonus situation rather than tying into larger raises or additional ongoing benefits. Bates said that in their discussions so far, the question was to identify what was exceptional, over and above work effort.

Erb: We have guidance in the personnel policy on using CPI so that gave me a starting point. As far as permanent wage increases, some positions need to be addressed. There are employees being paid the same or even in some cases less than employees they are supervising. We need to make some adjustments to that. It is going to be important to retain employees because we know how difficult it is to recruit right now. We are out for a position right now for the Assessing and Planning Secretary position. Some towns have used ARPA funds as bonuses for people who worked during the pandemic.

Erb: I am more concerned about ongoing, more permanent wage changes. I would like to focus on that but if that is not possible, there are ARPA funds (\$272,000), and there is more flexibility now on how those funds can be used. But bonus money to employees who worked during the pandemic has always been an allowable cost. When we get deeper into the salaries, we can certainly talk about what the options are.

5. Affordable Housing. Chair Bates stated when the Select Board talked with Rob Kelley a couple of months ago, the CDC was not looking to have town assistance for the housing study. Bates said affordable housing was a very important point for the stability and prosperity of the town, the school, and all the other things associated with younger people who can and cannot afford to live in town.

Selectperson Willey said that several new, affordable houses had gone in recently. She thought affordable housing was a hard thing because of the lot size ordinances, but she thought this issue was starting to fix itself. Willey, "A lot of new, small double-wide houses have come in (town) recently."

6. Climate Change and Sea Level Rise (SLR). Chair Bates said the committee started organizing and the plan was to get the group training later this year. He thought people in town were cognizant of the way Sea Level Rise and climate change would affect the town.

Ellis: Is there a budgetary need for the training or the work that is happening? Chair Bates stated that St. George was picked by a nonprofit group to be a trial site for the training, and the group had already sent the town some money which was factored into the budget. Bates said that would more than cover the cost of the training and did not see a need for any additional funding around climate change.

Chair Bates said inevitably issues would come up. For example, taking steps to protect Drift Inn Beach Road. He stated that Town Manager Erb submitted a grant application that would help fund a cost analysis study and include some design work. Bates added there were other areas in town that sooner or later would need attention.

7. Warming Shelter and Support Group. Chair Bates commented that he was interested in seeing the warming shelter and support group revitalized and thought there were efforts to do so. A new generator was installed in the school a couple of years ago to use explicitly for that purpose.

8. 10 Cold Storage Road. Statement-question: The delays must involve increased costs? Chair Bates stated that was correct.

Erb received a letter stating the review committee had hoped to have a decision on the 10 Cold Storage Road application, but they had not, and it would be reviewed in early March. Erb said there was concern that the cost of construction was increasing rapidly, but based on the consultant's recommendation, they shifted the application to a different source of money where the federal match increased by a significant amount. Erb, "We are hopeful that with the same amount of local money, we will actually be able to do more. My concern right now is about getting the grant and less concerned about the amount at the moment."

Ellis: Is there enough in the budget for what that work is intended to accomplish and cost?

Erb: I do not have a full update, but Noel Musson did put something together to get us into this new round of funding from a different source. I can pull something from Noel's document and share that with you (Ellis).

Ellis stated she would like to see it. Erb said he would ask Musson for a summary of the financials.

9. Communications. Question: How can the town better communicate with its citizens? Chair Bates said various things had been tried, and most recently, Ben Vail was working on the town newsletter. Vail explained the newsletter is posted online, there are about 25-30 copies that go out in the regular mail, and there are copies available in the reception area at the town office.

Bates suggested if anyone had news/information they thought should be included, talk with Rick Erb or Ben Vail. Vail said he had a long list of people who got a monthly email from him, and if there were other people or organizations in town that needed to be on the email list, let him know.

- Review of FY'23 Proposed Town Budget:

General Assistance. \$2,500 request. There was no change to this line item.

Social & Community Services. Chair Bates noted three late requests had been received: St. George Youth & Scouting Council, the Coastal Children's Museum, Rockland, Maine, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

- The St. George Youth & Scouting. \$10,000 request. This organization has not requested funding for a couple of years.
- The Coastal Children's Museum. \$5,000 request.
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust. \$1,000 was the suggested request. In past budgets, St. George voted to appropriate \$1,000 to the Maine Coast Heritage Trust.
- AIO. \$3,000 requested by AIO. This is a \$1,000 increase over last year. The organization asked for 22% of the cost of the services they provide to the town of St. George, i.e., \$7,200 for assistance with 18 electric bills; \$5,000 for the food pantry to help people in St. George; and, \$1,600 for weekend meals for St. George school children.
- Coastal Opportunities. \$100.00 request.
- Health Equity Alliance. \$250.00 request. This is the same amount as last year.
- Knox County Health Clinic. \$2,000.00 request. This is the same amount as last year. The agency provides dentistry, telehealth, and taxi vouchers to get to the doctors. Elwell stated that many people from St. George use this clinic. Sawyer felt it was a worthy organization.
- Lifeflight. \$648.00 request. This is the same amount requested as last year. The request is based on their formula of 25 cents per capita. Lifeflight does accept private donations.
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust. \$1,000 suggested request. This nonprofit agency supports the Bamford property, High Island, and Clark Island. Amanda Devine helped with the issue of parking at Clark Island Road. Chair Bates felt this organization had helped St. George a great deal and suggested a donation of at least \$1,000. Bates stated MCHT did not request a specific amount. He noted that a few years ago, the town donated \$10,000 but last year the town donated \$1,000. Ellis said it would be nice to do more but for this year she would leave the amount at \$1,000. Hall agreed. Oelberger noted that for the Ft. Point permitting, MCHT contributed \$1,200 earlier this year for the Conservation Commission to do the permitting and they had committed to additional funding towards the Fort Point project if the CC needed it.
- Maine Public. \$200 request. This is the same amount as last year. Willey asked if Maine Public contacted the town every year for the request. Bates said they did, and Erb added that Maine Public sends the town a letter.
- MC ME Community Action. No request from Mid-Coast Maine Community Action.
- Neighbor to Neighbor. No request this year. They wrote a letter stating they had been successful in securing a grant from the Maine Community Foundation.
- New Hope for Women is now New Hope Mid-Coast. \$1,045.00 request. This is the same amount as last year. Fourteen (14) St. George residents benefitted from this agency.
- Penquis CAP. No request was submitted.

- Rockland District Nurses Assoc. \$3,000 request. This was the same amount as last year. Drinkwater said RDNA supplements what St. George Community Paramedicine does. If RDNA cannot get to someone, the St. George Community Paramedicine will.
- Spectrum Generations. \$3,000 request. This is the same amount as last year. This agency helps with aging and disability resources. Thirty-two (32) St. George residents benefitted from their services.
- St. George Youth & Scouting Council. \$10,000 request. The group did not receive any funds from the town last year. The heating system failed, and they need a safety rail. The St. George Boy Scouts do not have a leader and were not meeting at this time, but the Girl Scouts were, and they had been using the building, and occasionally Trekkers use the building. Girl Scouts do not meet in people's homes and Bates felt the town should help get the heating fixed and install a safety rail. Ellis said this was protecting the town's investment (the building). She said a lot of groups had worked on the building over the last two decades and no heat in it would cause it to deteriorate faster. Hall agreed.
- Trekkers. \$2,500 request. This is the same amount as last year.
- Waldo County CAP. \$100 request. This agency provides transportation for St. George. Last year they provided 1,799 miles of transportation for St. George residents. This is 2.5% of the services they provided.
- Veteran's Graves. \$4,230.00 request. This is the same amount as last year. This amount is based on a formula on the number of veteran's graves in each of the cemeteries in town.
- Jackson Memorial Library. \$50,000 request. This is the same amount as last year. Williamson stated the letter received from JML indicated a lot of what they do for all age groups in town. It is a vibrant place and a wonderful, thriving community center in all sorts of ways. The question of how much does the library save the school? It is a fairly substantial amount. If you think about the space that we save the school and that our librarian is delivering the curriculum The consulting librarian is at the school in a very minimal capacity for credentialing purposes. Moskowitz is up to the school frequently or the children are coming down to JML, so it is very integrated into the school program. Hall and Sawyer were supportive of the requested amount.
- Shellfish Management. \$3,000 request. This is the same amount as last year. This amount is St. George's monetary portion of the five town shellfish management program.
- Community Development Corporation (CDC). \$10,000 request. This is the same amount as last year. Rob Kelly gave a presentation about the CDC's programs several months ago. Willey asked if the CDC sent a proposed budget or any documentation with their request. Bates stated they did send in several pages of information which included their budget, their profit and loss, and a two-page explanatory letter about things they were doing, e.g., the food pantry, the winter coats, the fuel program, the emergency aid fund. Hall thought this was a very good organization for the town to support.
- CDC Broadband Initiative. Hall stated the Connect St. George Broadband Project was extremely well done by the CDC group and that the project would be completed.
- Ambulance Service. \$230,000 request. Last year's request was \$130,000. Question: Why had the Ambulance Service budget request gone up by \$100,000? Erb said their proposed budget only showed an increase in the personnel area, but the rest of their budget was down slightly. Bates thought taxpayers had come to expect a certain level of service and expertise of the paramedics and this was what it would cost

to keep that level. Elwell added that paramedics in neighboring areas were getting paid more than what St. George was paying.

Erb asked Drinkwater if some of the cost was driven by changing from shift pay to hourly rate to get people to stay?

Drinkwater: "Yes. Instead of paying people \$60 for a 12-hour shift, they would get hourly pay for the 12-hour shift. That is what we are going to have to do to keep our drivers, EMTs, and our Advanced EMTs. Even with the services given, we also did vaccine clinics this year. Our 9-1-1 calls are 252 to 300, but we have given almost 400 vaccines and booster shots out and we saw 142 Community Paramedic people. We have occasionally gone out of town to see community paramedic patients because St. George is the only Community Paramedic town in Knox County, so we do get called outside sometimes." Drinkwater noted that 132 of the community paramedic patients lived in St. George.

- The Coastal Children's Museum. \$5,000 request. This is a first-time request. The letter received explained that this was a year-round, not-for-profit business located in Rockland but had been a strong presence in the mid-coast community for 14 years. It focused on educational enrichment for children ages 1-8. Ellis said this was a great resource for children and was as good as the Portland Children's Museum and had done an enormous amount on a very small budget.

The Budget Committee and Select Board discussed what would be an appropriate amount of funding. Ellis and Williamson noted this was a worthwhile organization that people in the town of St. George benefitted from. Ellis suggested they match what the town gave Trekkers. Percival asked if Moskowitz and Delaney from JML knew anything about the museum. Do they know about the museum and ever take their kids there? Ellis stated they knew about it, and the library had a pass to get into the museum. (See the staff about the pass.)

Sawyer suggested \$1,000 for a first-time request. The Select Board postponed taking any action. Bates suggested he contact the Children's Museum and have a board member attend the Select Board and Budget Committee on February 28, 2022.

Planning Department.

This department has an 8% increase request. Erb noted that under the line item equipment, \$2,500 was requested and \$2,000 would go to a sound meter if the town goes in the direction of an amusement ordinance. There had been a request to improve some of the map storage and items. Many items were deteriorating and were looking for a better way to store those.

Erb: The Secretary position. That is not the Planning Board Recording Secretary. It is the secretary in the office. The position is paid for three different ways: 25% comes out of Planning, 25% under Assessing, and 50% under Front Office.

The position is about to become vacant, and we are recruiting. Erb stated he had been in discussions with someone who would have been exceptionally well qualified to the point where the administration would have to pay a little bit more than now, and that was why it is \$14,000. Unfortunately, that person finally decided the position wouldn't work. It would have been a

fairly significant pay cut for that person, and we are back to recruiting for that position. I do not know if we would need that full amount but for right now, I would leave it, and I can revisit it at a future meeting. We have had more expenses in the Appeals Board, so I did bump that up.

Parks & Recreation.

There is an increase requested in this department. Vail: There is a request to put "reclaim" asphalt in the parking lot of the St. George Ball Field because it is now being used during the winter months. In the past, the parking lot was blocked off until the frost left but the gravel bed there is pretty unstable when the frost comes out. It looks like we are going to continue to use that parking lot year-round.

The rink project has been very successful. We have another month of skating depending on the weather. That was the one difference in last year's budget. Overall, there is no dramatic increase. This year's budget is up about \$500 in total from last year's budget.

Ellis: Will the ball field maintenance will be mostly your time, and do you have any large projects this year?

Vail: There is money in the budget for recutting the arc at the little ball field but nothing beyond that. We do not have to buy a liner for the rink, and we are not doing any spraying at the field for weeds.

Elwell: Did the dugouts get done?

Vail: Yes and no. Mostly they are in good shape but one of the dugouts has a terrible roof issue, but Jarrett already has the shingles and plans to do the re-shingling in the spring when he gets a chance.

Williamson asked if there was money in this budget for the skateboarding park, and would that come online during this year's budget, if there was repair and maintenance? Vail stated at this point, he was not anticipating any request for taxpayer funds as they were still in the process with Town Manager Erb in checking out the possibility of a skateboard park, i.e., are there any requirements on the property, connecting with neighbors. Vail said, "Assuming we cover those hurdles, we intend to do this through fundraising and private donations."

Harbors.

A small increase to this department. There is an increase under the Municipal Boat Reserve. Cline is staying within his current budget. Hall thought this department's budget looked straightforward. Elwell stated that Cline did a lot of the repairs and maintenance rather than contracting it out.

Selectperson Elwell asked if town insurance went up this year. Erb said the town got health insurance through Maine Municipal Association and it was only a 2% increase which from his experience was pretty phenomenal.

Unclassified.

- Family Health Contingency Account. Erb said he estimated the line item as the amount depended on who was employed by the town. Did they have families? Did they pay for the coverage? Did they have other alternatives other than the town? All of those would factor into that amount.

- Fuel Purchase – Town Tanks. \$45,000 request. Erb stated that he looked at past years and attempted to reduce that amount but then looked at the cost of gas today, and left his estimate in.

- Energy Efficiency Reserve. Erb noted this is tied to the solar operation at the Transfer Station. Chair Bates stated money was being set aside so, at the end of year six, they could have a buy-out in year seven.

- 38 Main Street. Request of \$1,000.

Ellis: Why was the town putting money into 38 Main Street?

Chair Bates: The St. George Historical Society had a three-year lease on that building. We do not know if there will be some maintenance that will be required of that building.

Selectperson Hall: The Historical Society did the roof, didn't they? The Historical Society said that it would do maintenance on the building. Bates stated yes, the Historical Society did the roof. The town, itself, did not pay for the roof.

Finance Director Ames stated there was \$7,125.35 in that account and she had not transferred the \$1,000 yet this year, which would total \$8,125.35. Ellis thought that was a good reserve fund for that building. Elwell suggested they put \$1,000 in this year and next year, capping it at \$10,000. Bates thought \$8,500 seemed like a reasonable amount to have in the fund. Hall agreed. The \$1,000 request was removed from the budget.

Erb asked if the Contingency Fund had ever been used. Elwell thought money had been withdrawn once for Transfer Station equipment. Hall asked if they needed \$25,000 in the Contingent Account. Ellis thought it was a good idea to have a safety net. Hall asked if the account needed to be that much. Erb stated that if he was on the committee or the board, he might wait until the end of the process to decide if that was the correct amount. Hall noted that they had contingencies built in other areas, like the equipment reserves but he liked Erb's idea of seeing where they were at the end of this process and discussing it again.

- Fireworks. It was discussed whether to fund \$10,000 towards fireworks for St. George Days. Finance Director Ames: That last year, one person donated the money. Other people wanted to contribute which offset some of the costs, but it is not legal for the town to collect those donations or order the fireworks unless there is some money in the budget. So even having just \$100 in the budget for the fireworks, would make it legal for the town to collect donations and organize the fireworks displays.

Chair Bates noted that last year a group of citizens, and one person, in particular, donated \$10,000 towards fireworks., and that it was very generous of that person. Bates did not know if St. George Days would occur this year. Ellis thought the money should be budgeted.

Williamson asked if the money did not get used for fireworks, would the fund roll over or disappear? Hall did not think the money would roll over.

Selectperson Hall and Ellis thought there has been a lot of popular support in town over the years for fireworks at St. George Days and Sawyer agreed. Elwell thought \$10,000 was a lot of money to spend on fireworks. Ellis thought it was nice that the funds came from the town and did not rely on private individuals. She said, "If someone wants to donate to the town to reduce the \$10,000 that would be great."

A motion was made by Selectperson Willey, seconded by Hall, to allocate \$10,000 for fireworks at St. George Days with the understanding that if donations are received, they will be applied to the \$10,000, reducing the town's cost of the fireworks, and any unused part of the \$10,000 will not roll over or remain in that fund. A roll call vote was 5-0 in favor.

- Minutes: The minutes of January 24, 2022, were reviewed and corrected.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to approve the January 24, 2022, minutes, as corrected. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was 5-0, in favor.

- Communications: None.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of February 7, 2022, was reviewed and will be signed by the Select Board electronically. The total expenses were \$157,555.38 and included a payment of \$15,159.42 to Fire Tech & Safety of New England and other regular expenses.

Selectperson Willey asked what the Fire Department purchased. Fire Chief Michael Smith stated that over the past five years, the department had been buying new air packs. They purchased two more as they needed all the air packs to be the same type and be compatible.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Career Technical Education (CTE). Michael Felton contacted Town Manager Erb and asked to be on the agenda to talk about Career Technical Education (CTE), the building, and the program. Erb stated, if there were no objections, he would contact Felton and have him placed on the February 28th Select Board agenda to discuss this.

- Spirit of America Foundation. The foundation sent a letter to the town about the annual award. Erb said the letter suggested that if towns wished to go with the person they dedicate their town report to, that would be fine. Erb stated he would be happy to submit the name of that person after the selection was made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation Commission (CC): Selectperson Willey said she had sent out last month's finalized Conservation Commissions minutes to the Select Board.

She reported: The CC met on February 3, 2022, at 4 p.m. They discussed Fort Point and discussed the trail restoration and the bridge rebuild.

The CC said they needed to talk with other groups, i.e., Maine Coast Heritage Trust, about management plans for the Bamford property, Clark Island, and High Island.

Selectperson Willey said the CC was planning another program on invasives in late spring and in March (2022), a tree pruning seminar would be held at the Bamford property. They will also show proper pruning and care of apple trees.

Sea Level Rise. The CC is trying to put together a committee of 10 people to work on that. Chair Bates added that Dan Verillo was taking over that work and the next stage was training for the community.

Solar Energy. The CC discussed commercial-scale solar farms and how prime farmland was being lost. Maine farms were looking at dual uses as possible answers. They were looking at blueberry fields and pastures as possible solar farm locations. For more information, go to the Pen Bay Pilot, search: Solar projects.

Trekkers. The Trekkers Director, Brandon Carron, joined the meeting to talk about ways Trekkers, the Conservation Committee, and the St. George School might collaborate on projects in the fall after school starts.

- Board of Appeals (BOA): Selectperson Willey reported that the Board of Appeals met on February 3, 2022, to discuss the Remote Participation Policy and hold a workshop. Willey said she was unable to attend but the BOA did vote on the Remote Participation Policy.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met on January 25, 2022, at 7 p.m.
 - Application to install a 5' x 25.5' fixed pier with a 3' x 50' seasonal aluminum gangway (ramp) and a 12' x 24' seasonal float at 398 Wallston Road. The application was approved. There is a question of whether the DEP will allow the large float they want to install. That is the only contingency the Planning Board had. It was a short meeting.

The Planning Board had been holding workshops after their regular sessions to talk about and work on the Land Use Ordinance. Bates stated he hoped the Land Use Ordinance could be on the ballot for the November 2022 elections.

- Shellfish Committee: Selectperson Sawyer reported the committee hired Jeff Schroeder as the new Shellfish Warden.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 10 Cold Storage Road Grant Application: Town Manager Erb explained earlier in the meeting that the review of this application was postponed to early March 2022.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT): Town Manager Erb explained the MDOT wanted to construct crosswalks and ADA compliant ramps on town property at Juniper Street by the storage building and one in the area of the school. The MDOT would pay the town \$500 for the easement on Juniper Street, and about \$600 for the easement at the school. MDOT would need to have an appraiser measure the square footage and calculate the worth of the easement. MDOT would pay the town for construction and maintenance easements for those.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to accept the Maine Department of Transportation's proposal for the easement on Juniper Street and the easement **at the St. George Municipal School, Tenants Harbor** to construct crosswalks and ADA compliant ramps. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor. The motion passed.

- Abatement Requests: The Board of Assessors reviewed the following three abatement requests heard by Assessing Agent Bob Gingras on January 26, 2022.

- Bob Wiggin, M/L 232-047, 13 Wiggin Road. The abatement was denied with explanation of assessment. Assessor Agent Gingras noted that the applicant understood the town's criteria.

- Mark Miller, M/L 233-062, 92 Eagle Quarry Rd. The abatement was denied with explanation of assessment. Assessor Agent Gingras noted that the applicant understood the town's criteria.

- Michal Smith, M/L 216-024, 50 Shipyard Rd. The abatement was denied with lot and acreage adjusted going forward. Assessor Agent Gingras noted that the applicant understood the town's criteria.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey, to accept the recommendations of Assessing Agent Bob Gingras and deny the applications for an abatement. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor. Motion carried.

- Special Amusement Ordinance: Chair Bates explained that the Special Amusement Ordinance arose from issues neighbors had with the Happy Clam Restaurant last summer.

Town Manager Erb explained that other towns in Maine had dealt with this issue, so he pulled parts from their ordinances that seemed to be most applicable to St. George. One challenge was trying to establish an ordinance that would work and address the issues that neighbors had raised but knowing it would have to apply to other parts of town where there may not be an issue.

Erb: I tried to come up with a measured process regarding the level of decibels that would be allowed and starting and stopping times for entertainment. Those were the big issues. It will get sent to Michael Jordan because he is leading the effort to consolidate ordinances, take away conflicting language, and he had some suggestions which I sent to Attorney Costigan. I have spoken with Richard Bates about was having this on the agenda for a workshop type of discussion which would be open to the public. At a later date, there would be a public hearing held.

It is important to remember that the way we have written this, only applies to businesses that hold liquor licenses. Would this be a problem if there is a parade or something? The answer is no because it does not apply to those situations. It is pretty much entertainment in bars and restaurants which not everyone might not want to regulate.

I did reach out to the East Wind Inn and the Craginair. The Craginair had a few concerns about their occasional wedding reception business, but I do not think it would be a big issue for them. The East Wind Inn didn't think they would have a problem; they are just still getting their "feet wet" so I do not think they know exactly what impact it might have. I contacted The Harpoon and did not hear back from them. I will take a drive down there because I think they should be aware of this. I have been in touch with Dan Falla. He was the neighbors' representative. As far as I know, he is still taking a petition around, but I have not seen any sign of it yet.

Selectperson Elwell told Erb he should contact Emily Chadwick regarding The Harpoon, as the restaurant and bar were currently closed. Chair Bates noted the concern was keeping the Watts Avenue neighborhood satisfied and at the same time not limiting businesses. It would be a difficult compromise. Bates, "Whatever has to work in Tenants Harbor has to work in Port Clyde. I hope Emily Chadwick and the Harpoon attendees will pay attention to this."

Van Thompson to Town Manager Erb: The ordinances I was looking at from Michael Jordan pertain to every resident; it was not specific to liquor licenses. This will need to be discussed at a workshop as this is different.

Hall thought the proposed ordinance draft was good: The key here, how loud are proposed levels? Would that satisfy the people of Watts Avenue and the Happy Clam? Are they set too low for The Harpoon? I think those are the questions people will have; to have some kind of demonstration of what 65 decibels is, will be very, very important.

The Select Board and Erb discussed possible ways to simulate decibels, but Erb said it would get complicated because they would be measuring it at the property line when what mattered was what it sounded like at the person's house.

Hall explained that because of the process a person had to go through to get a permit approved or repealed, it was hard to say to people, "Let's try it and see what it is. Maybe what you say is, 'This is what we are proposing, let's go through the summer and make the measurements and go from there.'"

Sawyer thought some of the Watts Avenue concerns were that listening to a lawnmower for an hour was different than listening to loud music; it was the duration of the sound. "The sound isn't just a half hour or the 38 seconds to run your garbage disposal. The sound is all evening, or it is all afternoon. How do you figure duration?"

Erb said he reached out to Greg Howland who was in Florida. "The conversation did not go that badly. Obviously, he does not like it and they feel a little targeted, but he will participate by Zoom. Bill Reinhardt will represent Greg and asked for him to be included in any emails I send out."

Selectperson Willey thought the Happy Clam was in a unique situation where it was an open-air type of event. She said if the wind was blowing the other way, she would assume it would not be as loud on Watts Avenue. It would depend on the direction of the wind. Willey, "How can that be measured to get a true measurement of what is going on Watts Avenue? As for the duration, I think they usually run from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday."

Chair Bates thought that had been the problem. "As far as the ordinance is concerned, it is anywhere along the property line. There will be times when it is very loud towards the Wyeth property and then other times when the wind is blowing towards Watts Avenue."

Selectperson Hall stated something needed to be tried. Chair Bates hoped that people who had licensed properties would get involved and mobilize their customers. Chair Bates suggested a discussion with the public be held on March 3 at 7 p.m., and that Attorney Costigan might have a few comments about Michael Jordan's proposal by then.

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall to approve a public meeting on March 3, 2022, at 7 p.m. at the Town Office to discuss the Special Amusement Ordinance Draft. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall to extend the Select Board meeting beyond 9 p.m. The roll call vote was 5-0, in favor. Motion carried.

- In-Person Meetings: Chair Bates noted that Covid-19 cases had started to decline, and hospital admissions appeared to have peaked. He suggested the Select Board start meeting in person, as of Monday, March 14, 2022. Sawyer stated he was okay with meeting in person as long as there was not another Covid-19 surge and hospital admissions were not on the rise. Bates agreed and said they could revisit this issue at the February 28th Select Board.

Select Board consensus was to start meeting in person, again, effective Monday, March 14, 2022.

There was no further business.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Willey, at 9:10 p.m. by a roll call vote of 5-0 in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary