

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2022 - 7p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Richard Bates (Chair), Randy Elwell, Steve Cartwright, Van Thompson, Wayne Sawyer, Richard Erb, Susan Ellis, Scott Vaitones, Dave Percival, and Jerry Hall

Present by zoom: Loreen Meyer and Fred Brewer were present.

REGULAR SESSION

Public comment

There were no public comments.

Adjustments to the Agenda

1. FY21 Audit
2. Quarterly Financial Review with Budget Committee
3. FY24 Town Budget
4. Letter of Support for the County GIS Program

FY21 Audit

David Percival

Are there any arbitrage issues regarding Cold Storage Rd. that the town should be paying attention to?

Brewer

Last year, you made about \$13,000 in interest on those funds, and spent \$7,600 so you still have \$2.4 million in that capital project account. As far as the arbitrage goes, it's not material but you should probably use the net to pay the interest on the note. I know that the project itself is significantly more than what you borrowed. I haven't

spoken to Richard for a while about the status of the project, but I know you're trying to get some EDA money to help offset the cost overrun.

Erb

Fred, we are approved for that and are in the process of going out to bid on the project now.

Susan Ellis

We were concerned about whether we were making more on it than we were being charged.

Brewer

No, you are not, but interest rates have been rising so the interest rate you have on that note varies from 3-3.5%. That's something to be conscious of. I cannot remember what that account was earning last year for an interest rate, but rates have been rising rapidly. It's something to look into.

Susan Ellis

Can we use a past year's gap, between what we were paying and what we were earning, to absorb an overage in a future year?

Brewer

Yes, if you're using it to fund a project, and it's available.

Susan Ellis

You're saying we need to keep an eye on the interest that we're being paid?

Brewer

Yes.

Susan Ellis

But we are getting closer to using this money, aren't we?

Brewer

You're not setting out to earn more than what you're paying. Hopefully, you're able to start using that money in the next six to eight months.

Susan Ellis

Is that right?

Erb

Yes.

Susan Ellis

Good. I think that was the Budget Committee's only question regarding the audit.

Erb

Fred, does it trigger a single audit because we're going to be receiving roughly \$4 million in federal funds?

Brewer

Yes, it will. I had another client that that used EDA grants and it was enough that you couldn't schedule the timing of the expenses. I try to tell people to stick below \$750K and if you go over it, then try and get as much of your federal expenses into one year as possible. I'm fine with doing a single audit for one year. If it needs to be done for two, I can do it for two. I just don't want to have you incur all those additional costs for an audit. If you time it right, you won't need it.

Erb

\$750,000 is the threshold?

Brewer

Yes, but you need to take into account whatever the school spends in federal money as well, so I don't think it will take you too long to cross that threshold.

Susan Ellis

What does a single audit add to our budget? Is that included?

Brewer

You could allocate it as part of your budget for the project. It's probably around \$2,500 more for an audit cost. It depends on the program. A lot of that is looking at the construction contract and making sure that everybody has signed off on all the pay requisitions and that they have been properly approved and paid in a timely manner. You can see here what the federal monies were that were spent.

Bates

Excuse me, Fred, what page are you on in the audit, please?

Brewer

I'm on page 54, the last page. Most of what is noted here is what the school spends, so you can use this as a guide on whether or not you need a single audit. The school lunch program is \$71,000. The Department of Treasury section is all COVID related monies that came in, CRF-1 and CRF-2, and the school is still spending some of that now. The US Department of Education expenditures are fairly consistent. The line item for almost \$32,000 in revenues will go away because that won't exist in any future years. If you take the \$562,000 that you spent there and subtract off the \$320,000 It's going to be an additional \$500,000 to \$600,000 before you trigger a single audit.

Bates

We will trigger the single audit. Thank you for that guidance.

Susan Ellis

It depends on when you start the construction. If it starts in May and you have two pay requisitions totaling \$250,000, you're not going to be a single audit this year, but next year you probably will. If you can get it done before the end of the next year, you are limiting your need for a single audit in future years.

Bates

There are many reasons to hope for that.

Brewer

I'm sure everybody is ready to have the project done because it has been carrying on for five years now.

Bates

I have a general question. Fred, in the audit I looked through the letters that you included and the summary. There's no specific advice or recommendations on possible changes or improvements that the town should make to the accounting process. There isn't anything we need to fix. Is that right?

Brewer

Yes. Here's the independent auditor's report. On the last page, it states, "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly in all material respects for the financial position of the government and citizens for the town of St. George." I think you are doing pretty well. You are managing your expenses and your revenues well. Let me present another summary.

Bates

Some of us have the audit in front of us. If you can tell us what page that will help.

Brewer

On the screen I have a summary of some of the financial issues that I usually look for in an audit. So much of what you do is based on the tax amendments, so I did the last three years. You can see the commitment summary. You were just shy of \$5 million for education, and now you're at about \$5.4 million. Your municipal costs were \$3 million, which is up to around \$3.2 million but most of that increase was the debt service for Cold Storage Rd. County taxes were up and it is surprising how much they went up as it is usually fairly stable. That depends on the state evaluation and they're constantly assessing your value. Overlay is what you control when you do the commitment. Your overall number has been between \$9 million and almost \$10 million. You've added some revenues to get to your next assessment. You assessed \$7.8 million in taxes in 2019 and you're at \$8.4 million in 2021. The other thing to be concerned about is the outstanding taxes. If you look at yours, it is about \$109,000 in 2019, \$140,000 in 2020 and \$88,000 in 2021. You are at a 98%, almost 99% collection rate on the taxes which you assess, which is great because it means you don't need as much of an overlay. Your cash, investments and your capital reserves have been fluctuating a little bit. The firetruck you purchased is in there. Your general fund cash was at \$2.8 million and now it is at \$4.3 million. Looking at your surplus, your undesignated fund balance was \$1.7 million in 2019, about \$1.7 million in 2020 and now it's at \$2 million in 2021. That big jump from 2020 to 2021 was a multitude of things. There was additional revenue sharing that came in; your excise taxes were up; and many of the motor vehicle registrations were pushed off because of COVID so vehicles that would have been registered in April, May and June of 2020 were all registered in July of 2021. You had a big jump in revenue sharing, and the homestead exemption went up. The next item is interest on taxes and that has a direct correlation to your outstanding taxes which went down. The interest on cash item is just the general fund cash. You were receiving \$28,000 in interest in 2019, about \$28,000 in 2020 and in 2021 it was \$12,000. With the jump in interest rates on your cash balance, your interest should be significantly more over 2021. When you're earning .45% and you go to 2%, it is a pretty significant jump. I would expect it to be back over \$30,000 when we look at the numbers for next year. One thing I usually look at is the total general fund cash expenditures as a percentage of

your undesignated surplus and you have about 18 - 22%. I usually equate that to months because everybody wants to know how long it will last if they don't have any excise collection, if nobody comes in and pays their property taxes. For St. George, it's about two and three quarters months, which is probably about where you want to be. I think you're managing things pretty well. You're collecting your taxes well. There is two and three quarters months, which is good, to get you by and could probably help get you through COVID.

Susan Ellis

We have generally used a two-month target for surplus. Are you suggesting that's no longer adequate?

Brewer

I think two months, at the bare minimum, is good. We have a pretty significant project coming up. If Cold Storage requires that you need another \$200,000 a year, you can go to the taxpayer and request to use our undesignated funds instead of borrowing more money. It's good to have a little bit of extra surplus in there. If people slow down on paying their property taxes, you're going to have to fall back on that. When you do the deferred property taxes calculation, you're looking at what is collected in the first 60 days after the year end. Your property taxes go from \$88,000, which is where you normally end up, but if people don't pay and it goes up to \$400,000 then you're going to be chewing up \$320,000 a year on undesignated funds because you didn't collect taxes. It can go the other way pretty quickly.

Bates

Thank you. That's a good point. With the economy going the way it is and various issues in the fishing industry.

Brewer

I've had towns where they miscalculated the revenue sharing and they actually had to take money out of undesignated funds because they needed to make up the difference from what they received to what they budgeted. That was a tough conversation to have because it wasn't \$20,000-\$30,000, it was \$150,000.

Bates

Any other questions?

Erb

Just a quick one, Fred. As you know, we'll be getting ready for the next audit and we're using an independent accountant to come in and assist with closing the books. Are you finding that more common?

Brewer

There has been a big push by the American Institute of CPAs to emphasize having something like that done. Their position is that if your auditors are making a significant amount of adjusting entries, they're on the verge of becoming more like management and are making decisions, so they are not independent anymore; they are management. What you're doing is bringing someone in to act on your behalf to make the journal entries and tie the accounts out so that when it comes down to the audit, it's more like a true audit where we're just checking the numbers, making sure everything looks okay and then giving our opinion. It's becoming a lot more common. RKO had one of their partners leave and come in as an independent person that looks at all of your accounts, tying them out, making journal entries and preparing the financial statements for the auditor. It's going to become more common.

Bates

Other questions?

Susan Ellis

Did you see anything else that we should be paying attention to?

Brewer

I would look at what you're budgeting for excise taxes. There's a great report that gives you the breakdown of the number of registrations and also the dollar amount based on each mill rate. For each of the six mill rates, it tells you how much fair market value you register and what the dollar amount was. It's a good planning tool. Some people are starting to increase the amount of budgeting for excise taxes. I get nervous when people do that but if they're using those reports it tends to be helpful to figure out where you think you're going to end up because a lot of people are leasing vehicles and get the best billing years in those registrations. If they continue to do that, then your excise collection should remain fairly strong. If they keep the vehicles for a long period of time, you're going to be at one-third of what the revenue is for those first three mill years compared to when you get up to your sixth or seventh year of registration. With the interest rates going up, the number of people leasing is probably going to go down, isn't it? It varies because so much of the lease is based on the value of the vehicle at the end of the lease term. With trade-ins worth so much more, it impacts the leasing rate, and it could be that it's cheaper to lease it and then trade it in.

Bates

Fred, thank you very much for coming and talking to us. Could you send the summary sheet that you posted to Rick or myself for our records? That would be helpful to stay connected.

Quarterly Financial Review with Budget Committee

Bates

The next agenda item is the quarterly financial review.

Susan Ellis

We're going through the first quarter, July to September, first quarter FY23.

Bates

What do you want to tell the Board?

Susan Ellis

Irene sent us the quarterly report and Jerry did for us what he does for the Town. We had some overlap. I look at the nitty gritty of the quarter compared to 25% of our budget and Jerry looks at that, but also where we look like we might end up for the year.

Jerry Hall

My work emphasizes where we are this year compared to last year, rather than comparing where we stand on a percentage basis to the budget. Because some items are seasonal, it makes for a more appropriate comparison. It's

just one quarter and it's hard to tell too much from one quarter so it's kind of a rough tool but as we get further through the year, I think it warrants paying more attention to it. My review says we're roughly on track on a gross basis. It projects revenues of \$1.6 million versus a budget of \$1.4 million and it projects expenses of \$3.4 million versus a budget of nearly \$3.6 million. I'm projecting that revenue is going to be a little higher and expenses are going to be a little lower. A couple of things are concerning. Excise tax is running down from the prior year.

Susan Ellis

It was interesting when you said there had been a delay in the fourth quarter of the previous fiscal year, into the first month of our new fiscal year. Maybe we had too rosy a picture.

Bates

That would make sense.

Jerry Hall

Again, with just one quarter it's too early to tell but it warrants another look. The state revenue sharing is quite high, but we had a revenue check dated June 30th that came in and it was credited in July, so it fell into the first quarter. It makes you wonder if the same thing happened last year or not and if that would explain why state revenue sharing payments are up substantially versus the prior year, but we expected them to be to some degree anyway.

Bates

Rick, I think you had some comment about that in the Town Manager's list.

Erb

They increased the percentage that goes to the municipalities.

Jerry Hall

I think you budgeted that with the expectation that it was going to be quite a bit higher; you budgeted conservatively. There were a couple of things that that popped out such as expenses, but generally most things on the expense side are pretty much on track. One of the things that stuck out was that the Planning Department is drastically underspending this year versus last year. We're doing one thing differently this year. In years past, the carry forwards were added to the budget and this year the carry forwards are booked as a credit to spend in the department. If you get a \$13,000 carry forward from Conservation Commission expenses, it shows as a credit in first quarter spending and shows the first quarter spending being very depressed. It's a better way to deal with it because you shouldn't be messing with what the budget numbers are. This is a good thing. It explains why some of the numbers look a little strange versus the prior year. My take on this is things look generally on track. There are a few questions that popped up, but they were the same questions that Susie had going through the line items.

Susan Ellis

I went through line items and what I look for are items that are over or under by 25% because this is supposed to be the first quarter of the year. Then I ask Irene or oftentimes I can figure it out myself. Some of them are carry forwards. Sometimes it's just timing like insurance which doesn't fall into nice quarterly amounts. I had a question about the property maps. Those all get paid in one lump mostly at the beginning of the year. Also, there's a new software license that we hadn't budgeted for that is for the CEO.

Bates

“iWorQ”, it's called. It's wonderful.

Susan Ellis

It makes life a lot easier. The roof is finished and has been paid for, and we didn't use all the money. I had a list of questions and Irene answered them all more than adequately and we came away pleased. If you want me to break it down line by line, I can. I don't want to give you too little information, but I don't want to bore you. Both Jerry and I felt good. Dave had a question that I thought you might have also.

David Percival

I noticed that most of the debt payment for the first quarter has already been paid except for the interest which is roughly \$39,000.

Susan Ellis

We pay a big lump of principle and some interest for most of the year, and then we pay another little loan.

Bates

There are two separate notes, and then there's the way the bond is being paid off. It's a little bit different.

Susan Ellis

Did you have these numbers to look at?

Van Thompson

I couldn't find them. Just the expense summary without the details.

Susan Ellis

Irene didn't send it to everyone?

Van Thompson

I went through all my emails.

Bates

I interpret it as a vote of confidence from Irene regarding the budget, but I will ask her to send them to everyone on the Board next quarter.

Jerry Hall

I told Irene I wouldn't attend the review and could she be sure to send them out quickly. That's why I think she just sent them to the Budget Committee and then the review was delayed.

Bates

Jerry, I think this method of your detailed model, together with Suzy's information, works really well.

FY24 Town Budget

We should move on to the third financial issue which Rick already shared with the Budget Committee. As Rick mentioned, there are some thoughts about where the budget for next year is heading and this is just to get us thinking about what we have ahead of us.

Erb

It's a little early because we don't have all the budget information put together yet, but it seems like a good idea to give you a heads up on what appears to be headed our way. My concerns are that we're all watching the county tax process within the current fiscal year, and we are scheduled for a 90% increase of almost \$200,000. We've met with the ambulance and the Board has met with the ambulance. We know that shifting them to a town department is going to bring substantial cost increases and we expect that to be somewhere in the area of \$500,000. I'd like to think that we can trim that further, but we know it's going to be a substantial increase. There are a few things that we know are headed our way. One is the cost-of-living adjustment. According to our personnel policy that follows the CPI, the CPI will be adjusted a couple of more times before we put our budget together, but we expect it to be a little over 7% for the year and we did get a quote from Maine Municipal Association on the health insurance premiums which are 4.5%. As I mentioned to the Budget Committee, it's a shame that they operate on a calendar year when all their members operate on a fiscal year, but we can take a guess for the other six months. The concern is that it could be a million dollar increase next year. I entered a placeholder for the school department. I don't know if they can stay within 5% or not but I figured it's better than putting nothing in. We also don't know what the outcome is going to be on the county tax. We will have Nick come in the first meeting in December to talk to us about county taxes. It will not be finalized at that point. The numbers that we're seeing so far, are disconcerting for sure. You've just heard from Fred and the Budget Committee. Financially, we're very solid right now. We have an increasing fund balance and cash is great but a concern I have is the increases as they apply to ongoing expenses. They are operating costs for the most part. Most of what we're talking about for financial resources are considered one-time expenses. It's great that they've given us a lot of latitude with how we can use the ARPA money but it's one time money. If we spend down our fund balance, we will reach a point where there isn't any more to use. In other places where I've worked, we made it a point when we have one-time money to use it for one-time expenses and not build it in because the day of reckoning will come and it won't be pretty. That's been a problem in some other places. These are some of the things that we're looking at now. It was a shame to lose the tax valuation of Allen and Benner Islands, but the good news is that Colby says they will make it up 100%. That's the number you see there, \$96,000. They really don't have to do this, so I am concerned about counting on it. It might be a case where you collect it one year and appropriate it the next, so you never get yourself in too much trouble. It's been done with other funds with a similar strategy. These are just some of the things that we're looking at, but it is way too early to be talking about next year's budget.

Minutes

A motion was made by Cartwright, seconded by Thompson, to consider the Select Board minutes dated October 31, 2022, as corrected, and by a 4-0 vote, the minutes were approved (Wayne Sawyer abstained).

Warrant

Bates

Rick, do you have a copy of the warrant? I don't know if the Board has any questions. Irene isn't here so if there are questions, we can take them down and forward them to Irene.

Erb

Nothing stands out.

Town Manager's Report

I have just a few things. The bid package for the Cold Storage Rd. project is now in the hands of the EDA as of late last week. I have a feeling they will turn it around fairly quickly by the end of the week. As far as I know, the revised schedule will still be applicable. As I mentioned, Nick Lapham will be coming in and that won't be until December 5th. Regarding the county budget, I had a request from Nat Lyon. He would like to speak to the Board about the Marshall Point property. I believe that will occur at the next meeting, two weeks from tonight. We have bids out right now and requests for proposals for legal services that are due back on November 18th, and I'll be reviewing those with Richard and a couple of members from the Planning Board and the Appeals Board. We have a request for auditing services due back on December 20th. I already have a couple of legal services proposals in hand, and I've heard from others and know that they're on their way.

Bates

Has Fred Brewer responded?

Erb

He hasn't had time yet. One thing that Richard did point out to me when we were talking about the changes with the ambulance, and if you read the charter carefully, it does show that it needs to be a ballot question. I spoke with the two previous town managers who have been involved in this and they looked at it and agreed, so the plan will have to have a ballot question and then it will become a budget matter for the next night's town meeting.

Randy Elwell

If it passes.

Erb

Right. There are a few things we're going to have to finesse here but that's where it's headed.

Bates

On December 1st, we are having a public meeting about the ambulance, so I need to send notices to the public. I think it would be the first of several meetings we will need to have.

Erb

I am participating these days with the MMA legislative policy committee, and they had one of their meetings last week. It was interesting. They spent a fair amount of time talking about affordable housing, which I'll discuss later in the agenda. The other item is the tax freeze for senior citizens. There are a lot of concerns about how this has not been very well thought through. Although I don't think we have our MMA proposal finalized yet, some feel

that a better approach would have been to build on the existing homestead exemption with a bonus for people who are over age 65, and also have a means test. We'll see where that goes, but there is a great deal of concern that this will be poorly handled all the way around after a lot of work. A big concern is, as the law was passed, the state makes up 100% of whatever the town loses. The piece of legislation says that, but it can be changed with a simple vote of the legislature. In the Maine Constitution, legislation passed twenty-five years ago, that directs the state to fund all mandates up to fifty percent, so the real concern among the town officials is they will revert to the fifty percent option and forget the one hundred percent. I've done some calculations on this, and the exponential growth is staggering.

Van Thompson

We are a predominantly elderly community.

Erb

Yes. Inevitably, there is going to be a tax increase next year. However, it will not affect people over age 65, if they filed the necessary paperwork. I just wanted to advise there is work being done by the MMA and that they have a better idea of things. We'll see what the legislature comes up with and if they agree. That's all I have.

Bates

Are there any questions for Rick about these issues?

Randy Elwell

Are we all set on salt and sand?

Erb

Yes, the sand has been put up for a while. There is a delivery of straight salt tomorrow morning at the Transfer Station. We've had salt deliveries mixed with sand, so now we'll go with straight salt.

Committee Reports

Conservation Committee

Cartwright

We had a meeting and they advised that on November 16th, there will be an invasive plant talk by Rebecca Jacobs of the Knox Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District at the old Guilford Butler School in South Thomaston. It's a joint venture between our commission and South Thomaston's commission. It's at 6:30 on Wednesday, November 16th. They will also discuss the brown-tail moth.

Van Thompson

Is that talk available on zoom? I think it would be worthwhile. It would be nice to let the community know because a lot of people want to attend but have other things going on.

Erb

Steve, was there any discussion about the Fort Point contract?

Cartwright

I asked about it and they said there was nothing new to report yet.

Erb

I think something just happened; it should be ready to be signed. I need to check on it.

Cartwright

I'm sure they're moving ahead but I didn't hear about that. You may know more than I do.

Bates

Is that something that you sign or does Ken in the Conservation Committee?

Erb

Honestly, it came in today and I haven't read it yet. I sign on behalf of the town.

Bates

That will get it moving ahead then. Okay, we heard from the Budget Committee.

Shellfish Committee

Wayne Sawyer

The Shellfish Committee met. Very routine meeting.

Planning Board 7:00pm November 10 Meeting

Bates

- The application to replace doors and windows at 215 Otis Point Road was accepted as complete and it was approved.
- The application to replace the windows, remodel bathrooms, repaint the exterior, carry out maintenance on the decks and re-roof the Seaside Inn (5 Cold Storage Road) was accepted as complete; meeting the standards of the Site Plan Review and Shoreland Zoning ordinances, it was approved.
- The application to replace the windows and siding, repaint the exterior and re-roof the Port Clyde General Store (2, 4 & 6 Cold Storage Road) was accepted as complete; meeting the standards of the Site Plan Review and Shoreland Zoning ordinances, it was approved.
- As the applicant was not present, the application at 61 Haskell Point Road was tabled.

Old business Code of Ethics and Protocols

Van Thompson

I just saw that MMA has a new protocol for their newly elected officials and the last thing at the end of their notes is code of conduct.

Bates

I know there are differences of opinion. I would like to try and pursue this. I know the school has a code of ethics and I think it is becoming fairly common. The notes I sent out this morning included an update that Rick had suggested in section 2.1.5 on page eight regarding diversity inclusion. I know it's a much thicker document than the one that Wayne sent me. I think it's partly because it's not just the Code of Ethics, but it also has some procedures for how to deal with things in the event there are any concerns.

Van Thompson

I think the addition on page eight was appropriate.

Bates

I don't want to rush this. I know Steve had concerns about signing it. We don't need to sign it, but we need to understand that this is the code that we go by. That seems to be the critical issue. In the Planning Board meetings, and Van will remember when he was on the Planning Board, at the beginning of every meeting, Chair Anne Cox asks if anyone has any conflicts of interest on the issues. It reminds everyone at the meeting to speak up if they have conflicts and not participate in the voting and so on. If we can agree on this general code and the procedures, maybe we should have that as a standard part of our Board meetings. What do you think about that?

Wayne Sawyer

That would be easy to do.

Randy Elwell

I would step back from the Fire Department.

Wayne Sawyer

Another issue would be if it was a family member we were discussing or something like that.

Bates

Steve, if we agree that we don't need to sign it, we acknowledge that we adhere to this as our way of practice and just as a reminder, mention it at every meeting.

Cartwright

I feel like there has to be some trust. We acknowledge that we have already taken an oath and sworn that we will do our best. I feel like we don't need to go through that again.

Bates

I'm okay with that but how does the Board feel?

Van Thompson

We should accept the Select Board Code of Conduct and Protocols.

Wayne Sawyer

I'm fine with that but I'd like to see it reduced in size.

A motion was made by Thompson, seconded by Elwell, for the Board to accept the Select Board Code of Conduct and Protocols, eliminating the section regarding the need for annual signing, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Election Clerk Appointment**Bates**

There is a new election clerk appointment for Elizabeth A. Oaks which will be effective through June 30, 2024.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Thompson, to approve the appointment of Elizabeth A. Oakes as Election Clerk through June 30, 2024, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Letter of Support for the County GIS Program**Bates**

I want to discuss the additional action items for the county GIS which I mentioned earlier. I received a call from Leticia vanVanuuren at the County GIS. She's concerned about the pressure on the budget in the county and mentioned that the County Administrator and the Budget Committee appreciate what GIS is doing for the county right now. She asked if we would write a letter to Andrew Hart supporting what she has done in the past and what she will be doing in the future. Andrew Hart is the County Administrator. I was just going through what the GIS capability has done for us in the past. It helped with some of the broadband expansion, and she worked with John Maltais on that. Apparently, she also worked with Tim on some software called the Road Assistance Manager. I think it helps with E911 mapping also. I know that she has done some mapping for the Conservation Commission and she's now most recently working on some sea level rise maps.

These are things that the GIS capability has helped us with in the past. In the future the county is going to have to revise the hazard mitigation plans and it will affect all the towns. GIS will affect that in a big way, next year. The point of this support is not only that it's been very useful in the past, but going forward, it will also.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, for the Select Board to write a letter to County Administrator Andrew Hart, supporting the past and future work of Leticia Van Buren at the County GIS, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Work Force Housing

Bates

The last item is a new business discussion about workforce housing, and where it could be located. We discussed the property north of Kinney Woods Road and Randy remembered it having some restricted stipulations and it does indeed. The tax map shows a rectangular piece of property which is 78 acres, and it stretches back a long way, roughly parallel to Kinney Woods Road. The restriction that was put in place was that no development should happen on Route 131. No buildings should be constructed on Route 131 back about 250 feet. You could have roads going in there but no visible houses on that side. This aerial view from Google Maps shows a lot of forest on the north side of the road, on the upper side. There's a plot of at least 24 acres in between the marshy area on the left and Jones Brook on the right. The suggestion that I have is that we authorize the CDC to do a survey in there to find out what is useful for that plot. There might be ten acres or so that would be excellent for some workforce housing, and it wouldn't significantly affect the property as far as trails and other things. It could be a useful parcel. The question I have to the Board tonight is do you want to think about it and talk about it at the next meeting or would you like to make a decision to approve the CDC to do the survey.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to authorize the CDC, at its own expense, to survey the town owned property on Kinney Woods Road to determine the potential of the property, without making commitments on behalf of the Board, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Bates

There would be a lot of work to do after knowing that it is usable land. It could be we would get into a consortium with the CDC and use a builder. This will be an opportunity to find out whether there's some prospects.

Erb

Habitat for Humanity is another option. At the Sunday meeting here, that's clearly what the attendees were asking the town to do. Instead of just talking about this, we should take some action.

Bates

I think that's all we need to talk about unless there are other things the Board wants to bring up.

Randy Elwell

I want to mention one thing. Don Kerrigan will be at the school tomorrow doing an interview. Chris Levitz is going to build toolboxes with the first grade and Don Kerrigan is going to be there for that, as well as doing an interview about the CTE building. Don Kerrigan is from Channel Six News in Damariscotta. He's going to be there to do interviews tomorrow with Mike Felton about the CTE and Ruthie's class which is tied into that too. We're going to get some good publicity on this. Yesterday, they had the festival at the school, and it really went over well. There was a lot of people there. There's been talk of having an outdoor Winter festival also just to bring people together and raise money.

Erb

Did Carolyn discuss the CTE building?

Randy Elwell

Ruthie's class is connected to the CTE. The staff group is still working on the curriculum and Mike Felton and a couple of the board members went to the MSMA conference and gave a talk about it. For two days, it was standing room only with people in the hallway to listen to it.

Bates

It's the only one in the state.

Randy Elwell

It's a model. St. George has always been a forerunner. For example, our transfer station was a model for years. I think St. George has always been that. People really look at our town with respect.

A motion was made by Cartwright, seconded by Thompson, to adjourn the Select Board meeting, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tammy Taylor

Recording Secretary

Town of St. George