

**ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS**  
**St. George Town Office**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 15, 2023**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Steve Cartwright, Van Thompson, Randy Elwell, Richard Erb, Wendy Carr, Jane Conrad, Irene Ames, Jolinda Rockett and Ann Snow.

Via Zoom: Present were Loreen Meyer, Adele Welch, and Ken Oelberger.

**REGULAR SESSION**

**Quorum**

A quorum was present.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

Election of Chair was moved to the first agenda item.

Port Clyde Traffic and Parking issue was added as an agenda item.

**Election of Chair**

Cartwright moved to establish Van Thompson as Chair of the Select Board, seconded by Conrad, and by a 4-0 vote, the motion carried (Elwell was absent at the time of the vote).

Cartwright moved to establish Jane Conrad as Vice-Chair of the Select Board, seconded by Thompson, and by a 4-0 vote, the motion carried (Elwell was absent at the time of the vote).

## **Conflicts of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest.

## **Establishment of Select Board Meeting Schedule**

### **Thompson**

Reviewing the beginning of year items, I particularly want to make sure you have looked at the schedule that was proposed by Rick Erb, so we have it for the town. I reduced it by one meeting. The financial review meeting in July is superfluous. We have two meetings a month and can call additional ones if necessary. This is not cast in stone, but I've tried to accommodate all the holidays that I know of. If I don't hear any objections between now and the next meeting, I will consider this our working schedule. The meetings will be on Monday nights at seven o'clock unless there's something else that comes up and the duration will be two hours. With a vote we can move to extend it. We'll try and make sure that we follow what Richard was doing and put out a draft of the agenda on Wednesday, and we'll finalize it on Friday, whenever possible.

## **Board Assignments and Board Committee Assignments**

Conrad moved that the Select Board continue to abide by the terms of the contract the town has with Rick Erb and continue his associated duties, seconded by Carr, and by a 4-0 vote, the motion carried (Elwell was absent at the time of vote).

Cartwright moved to reappoint Bill Kelly as Town Attorney and to reappoint Bob Gringras as Assessor's Agent, and by a 4-0 vote, the motion carried (Elwell was absent at the time of vote).

### **Thompson**

We also have the assignment of the Select Board representatives for the various committees, and it's probably best if we wait until Monday's meeting to finalize that so everybody can look it over and make their decisions about what they want, and because Randy would be involved as well. I would propose that I would continue on the Budget Committee, as I have been, and that's why I have it here in parentheses. Again, that would be up to all of us to decide. I have Rick Erb listed for the Solid Waste Committee and Steve Cartwright for the Conservation Commission. We would have to see what Randy Elwell does. Wendy Carr and Jane Conrad will have to look at what they would like. I thought of Jane for the Planning Committee.

### **Conrad**

I've been serving on the Board of Appeals, and I'd be happy to be the liaison to the Board of Appeals.

**Thompson**

Would you be willing to attend as an observer of the Planning Committee?

**Conrad**

Yes, but I also serve on the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and I do feel like it's really important for us to revise it. That is also a time-consuming committee when it's active. Wendy should feel free to speak up about this because I would be happy to work with the Comprehensive Plan Committee, or the Planning Committee, but I don't think I could do both.

**Carr**

I'll just take whatever is left. I view that role as a liaison and not an active role. I don't want to be on the Solid Waste Committee, as Rick and I discussed, because I have too much.

**Thompson**

You would be mostly an observer that reports back to us or gives some opinion related to how the Select Board feels about certain things if it comes up. It's rare that it does. It's under consideration at this time.

**Conrad**

Randy is listed now for the Comprehensive Planning Committee; by next week we could sort it out. I'm willing to do the Cemetery Committee if nobody else wants to do that. I served on a Cemetery Board years ago.

**Warrants**

**Thompson**

Do we have anything related to the warrant and is Irene around today?

**Conrad**

There were two warrants that needed to be signed.

**Erb**

We have bills to be paid.

**Thompson**

There was a payment to the school. Were there any questions in terms of your review? I didn't see anything particular outstanding that I considered a problem.

**Conrad**

The policy manual lists the people who have authority to sign disbursement warrants and Wendy and I are not listed there yet.

**Thompson**

You are as of this moment,

**Conrad**

We've been elected so I assume we could sign but we will need to also update the policy manual.

**Erb**

There was some discussion last year about that. There was a reason we use specific names.

**Thompson**

This will do as a proxy.

**Erb**

I have gone over all those bills, so if you see anything, I should be able to answer the questions.

**Cartwright**

Rick, the balance we have seems high to have in a checking account. It seems like we could be making money with it.

**Erb**

We have used the most effective method. We spent a fair amount of time looking at it.

**Thompson**

I had a question about improving the finance notices. Certain financial policies expire on the 15<sup>th</sup>. We are supposed to update with names of the Select Board members. There are treasurer's disbursement, warrants for wages and benefits, municipal education costs, payment of state fees, utilities and local vendors.

**Erb**

That is what allows us to have a member of the board review the payables and sign, allowing us to make payments, and avoiding delays to local companies and to avoid any penalties or late fees. That's a policy that went in, I think, only just a year ago.

**Thompson**

On Thursdays, one of us needs to sign for the disbursement, so they can occur on Friday.

**Erb**

Irene, we were talking about the finance policies that need to be renewed and how we deal with paying those promptly.

**Ames**

Basically, it just gives us permission to pay the bills timely, every week, versus waiting until after the Select Board meeting.

**Erb**

Richard took that responsibility. Does that mean we need someone specific?

**Ames**

Richard just took it upon himself, because he was the Chairperson, to do that when he could, and then he would on weeks that he was not able to do it, generally make sure that somebody else was available.

**Conrad**

Has it typically been any one of the five Select Board members?

**Ames**

Yes. Any one of the five would be authorized to do that.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Conrad, to approve the policy of enabling any board member to sign for the disbursements on a weekly basis, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

## **Town Manager Report**

**Erb**

Some things that I intend to discuss are under the agenda item of Status of Current Programs. One of them on my list is Memorial Day to make sure everybody was aware of that. Also, as I mentioned to you earlier, the heavy rain that we had a couple of weeks ago did quite a bit of damage on Kinney Woods Road. Working with Jim Kalloch, we repaired the culverts there, increased the size of them and built the road up higher. We are actually ahead of schedule because I've been told that the road has now been paved as of late this afternoon.

**Thompson**

Those are nice, big culverts.

**Erb**

We are hopeful that we will be able to get some FEMA reimbursement for that. It has been declared a disaster in the county because of the heavy rain. The way FEMA should work is if you have a place that traditionally gives you problems flooding, and you put the culverts back in at a size that will actually handle the water, they reimburse for that. The culverts that were there were the old, galvanized metal ones and they came out in pieces because there were no bottoms on them anymore. That was a good thing to have done. You've seen the notices about the governor visiting a week from Friday. The discussion about the work that's been done on sea level, which Dan has been very involved in, will be combined with a discussion of the school's CTE program, and you'll be getting more information on that. We thought that Hannah Pingree would be joining her, but she will be out of state on that day. One other thing I wanted to mention was that there has been quite a bit of work done on the Fort Point Trail. They have begun to work on that and are making good progress. When you get to the end, it becomes state property, and the state has agreed that they will pay for our contractor, Canada Trails Company, to also continue onto the state property and finish the project at their expense, so I appreciate the work of the Conservation Commission.

**Elwell**

They have done a lot of work in a short period of time.

**Erb**

They are doing well. It's a nice little company and is doing a good job for us. Next, we are preparing paving bids, and they should go out tomorrow. The roads we have listed at this point are Kline Road which we carried over from last year, Wiley's Corner Road which has seen a fair amount of damage over the last year, a couple of smaller roads that have not been paved in a long time, including the Wharf Road and Barter's Hill Road. Short roads tend to get forgotten over the years. I suspect we may have a small surplus if the bids come in as I think they will, but we will find a way to use it. We had a little bit of money left for paving this year. I'm actually using it on Kinney Woods Rd. right now. We're having to repave there. That's what I have to report.

**Elwell**

How are we doing on sand and salt?

**Erb**

We've stayed within budget; it was close. Today I received the salt price, and it actually went down this year compared to last year. It was a tough year for salt.

**Conrad**

Where did you get it from?

**Erb**

There are three or four companies that bid on it. Morton Salt out of Chicago.

**Conrad**

Did American Rock Salt bid?

**Erb**

No, they didn't but there are a couple of state firms. I know it was delivered from the dock at Searsport last year.

**Elwell**

Any word on the culvert on Route 73 by Jones Brook?

**Erb**

The state project is scheduled for this year. They had some issues earlier with right of way and had to take a few feet here and there but there are no problems this year.

**Minutes**

Elwell moved to approve the May 1, 2023 Select Board Meeting Minutes, as corrected, seconded by Cartwright, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

**Committee Reports****Elwell - Harbor Committee**

Thursday night's meeting went really well. Gerry Cushman brought up that the public float that we weren't going to install at the end of the public landing and is used quite a bit. Basically, we're going to work to try to get that in, and CPM is going to work to make a path so people can get in until they get to the point where it has to come out. It was good feedback, and we will try to get it done before the first of the month.

**Cartwright - Conservation Committee**

I was not well, so I missed the meeting, but Rick updated us on the trail which was the main issue.

**Oelberger**

I could add to what Rick had to say about Fort Point since that was a major accomplishment. At our meeting this week, we talked about support of the Resilience Committee at a solar fair that they want to hold in August. Richard was going to bring that up at the Resilience Committee tomorrow night. We've

committed to supporting that effort. Adding to what Rick had to say about Fort Point and the extension on the state property, we received an MOU from the state today. I don't know if Rick has seen that yet.

**Erb**

Just before I came into this meeting.

**Oelberger**

I saw it about six o'clock tonight myself. It looks like things are a go ahead there. I do want to have one discussion with Matthew, the Regional Park Director, and Doug Beck since they did bring up the Historical Preservation group wanting to participate. I want to make sure that if that interferes in any manner that they will have additional funding for that effort. The last month has been a lot of work on maintaining the trails after the various storms, but I think everything's up to snuff at this point. The downed trees have been cleared and an additional bog bridging has been put on the Town Forest Trail. The last thing would be the Jones Brook Trail. We've had a discussion with the one property owner that had requested that we not cross his property and he's reconsidering that. We'll know within the next month what we'll be doing with the Jones Brook Trail. We have permission from the Historical Society to have a loop trail from 131 around that loop, and if we don't receive permission to continue the way the trail used to run, we will hopefully have another loop from the town forest in as far as we can go. That's the major ongoing effort.

**Sign Abatement Certificates for Map 229, Lot 034**

**Erb**

I have two forms here where you sign as Municipal Assessor's. There was an error several years back where two minor structures were taxed on the wrong property. It's not a major amount. It's an abatement amount of \$92.16 plus \$9.80 in interest for the first, and \$94.08 plus \$5.23 in interest for the second one. We do give money back to the property owner, but we are only allowed to go back so far. This will do it. We do not bother to tax the person going back for our mistake, but going forward the two small sheds will be taxed to the right person.

**Port Clyde Traffic and Parking issue**

**Thompson**

One of the things that we need to really talk about is what's being done relative to the Cold Storage Rd. based upon what we heard at the May 11th meeting, and subsequent Harbor Committee meeting with the concerns about the town dock that's down there that a number of people use for various things, as well as the concerns with parking because in time we're going to be losing some of the parking on the



curved extension that comes out. The idea is to adjust the fencing so that there would be the possibility of getting to the dock if put back in place.

**Erb**

This is the preferred way to get people out there. Another way would be to use the floats.

**Thompson**

That goes up and down so much.

**Erb**

We would prefer not to go that route. We think this will work. It shows "temporary parking", and what appears to be three cars in this aerial photo. I asked Noel Mussen today if temporary parking means seasonal parking, and his answer was that it means two-hour parking. As we have it configured right now, we would have the other diagonal parking scheduled to be removed sometime shortly after July 4th.

**Conrad**

Are the only parking spots that would be lost in Port Clyde these ten spots? Other spots in front of the general store and closer to the Monhegan boat line will be unaffected, except as relates to traffic?

**Erb**

Correct.

**Conrad**

Whether they're town spots or not, I'm trying to figure out how many spots are we going to be down in Port Clyde total? Is it just these ten?

**Erb**

Yes. I can certainly imagine deliveries will be inconvenienced, but they're not going to be eliminated.

**Elwell**

In the summer, those ten spots are usually taken up by Monhegan Island Workers.

**Conrad**

I think we should talk about whether there's something we can do for workers going out to the island.

**Elwell**

I don't think that's something that we should be bothered with because they shouldn't even be parking there all day. The person who hired them should make arrangements for them to go from where they want to park, to get to the boat, to take them to the island. I feel that's not the town's responsibility.

**Thompson**

Could the town make allowances for space at the fire station?

**Elwell**

Yes, and nobody uses the Drift Inn parking lot even in the summer.

**Conrad**

Has the Harbor Committee ever met with the business owners and how have they responded to the loss of parking down there?

**Elwell**

Andy Barstow parks his employees there where it is public parking and the employees for Allen Island are parked there so technically there was never any public parking in Port Clyde anyway, because companies took it upon themselves to use it. Most of the companies have their own parking.

**Erb**

A concern that I've been hearing lately is what the town is doing is going to put more stress on local business' parking, and there was at least some discussion with the general store that they're going to have to be more vigilant in policing their own parking lot and I can imagine that's exactly what's going to happen. If we don't tow vehicles, nobody is going to respect the parking ordinance.

**Elwell**

If we start towing, we should start at Drift Inn Beach.

**Conrad**

Does it make sense to adopt an emergency ordinance that would be in effect in July and August, that people couldn't park for more than two hours in town spots.

**Carr**

Who's going to police that?

**Elwell**

The town years ago hired someone to patrol Drift Inn Beach and Port Clyde Village. It didn't go over well and that's why it didn't continue.

**Conrad**

People think they know what it's going to be like, but they don't know. With the size of the trucks and equipment that are going to be coming and going, it is going to be dramatically different.

**Elwell**

The trucks aren't bigger than the trucks I saw growing up coming out of the Old Cold Storage Rd, four or five times a day.

**Conrad**

Now it's much worse.

**Elwell**

It's about the same. CPM said that they would have people for traffic control. because every bit of equipment they're going to have will be on site.

**Erb**

That's going to be true for the tractor trailers.

**Elwell**

Dump trucks would be about probably the biggest thing coming in.

**Carr**

Where does Route 131 officially end?

**Elwell**

Right at the corner. Where Cold Storage starts by the old art gallery and the store.

**Conrad**

Have you seen the work schedule and when it's going to be the busiest. Do we know that?

**Erb**

It's tough to say. The months of July and August are going to be really difficult but whether they stay on schedule, it's hard to know.

**Elwell**

The busiest part will be when they start doing the infill.

**Conrad**

That is in September. They're having all the steel delivered earlier.

**Erb**

That should be June.

**Elwell**

First of the month, he said.

**Erb**

There was discussion about the town providing some sort of shuttle service. That would be a big task for us. I had an email on Friday from someone on the Harbor Committee and he was talking about 7am to 9pm and I would assume that was seven days a week. That is ninety-eight hours. I don't know where I would find people for that.

**Conrad**

At Thursday's meeting, they advised they're not working on the weekends. They're working from 8am to 4pm, Monday through Friday.

**Elwell**

If we take away parking, people are going to park off site even on a Saturday or Sunday. It isn't good for people to be walking from the fire station to the village.

**Erb**

There was some discussion about the use of golf carts.

**Carr**

Insurance liability, hiring and employee benefits are issues with that.

**Cartwright**

Would it make sense to put up signs, perhaps by Cold Storage as well as by the fire station, advising satellite parking?

**Erb**

If we're okay with people doing it on foot.

**Cartwright**

A lot of people are fine walking the road. People run on the road and ride bicycles.

**Conrad**

It also seems if you have guests for example, somebody could pick people up and drive them back and forth as some kind of satellite parking.

**Elwell**

My feeling is we could offer satellite parking to get the customers down there.

**Erb**

It would almost be like valet parking and it's going to cost the town a lot of money.

**Carr**

Has the restaurant ever been interested in that?

**Erb**

I haven't spoken with the restaurant. I talked to Veronica today.

**Elwell**

At the meeting, I was hoping more business owners would be there to give input.

**Thompson**

Andy Barstow has his boat line van. It seems to me if businesses want to get together with him, he could run a loop between the fire station and Drift Inn Beach and back down.

**Thompson**

When I talked to Andy early on, when I first came on the board, I was going around to various businesses to find out what the Select Board could and couldn't do. He was concerned Cold Storage was going to take away his parking.

**Elwell**

Businesses know where this is heading. They want the project. It's going to be nice when it's done for our working waterfront, and for recreational and commercial businesses. The businesses should be getting together to see what they can do to help each other during construction.

**Thompson**

The town would be open to proposals, in terms of what we have for resources.

**Erb**

And some of it is parking space that is further away.

**Conrad**

I think we need to be prepared to hear from people who are suddenly concerned around the Fourth of July. I think it's unlikely people are going to realize what it's really going to be like. Since the town owns this piece of road, public safety is our responsibility. The other thing that is important is communicating with the public about what's coming. I went on the website in the last couple of days and when you go to the Cold Storage Road project page, it states you can see a link to the site plan, but those links don't work. For the next six months, we should have the status on the homepage and maybe we should even think about calling it Port Clyde Harbor Renovation because only local people realize that's an address.

**Erb**

It could refer to it as the Port Clyde Landing.

**Conrad**

We could post information on schedules of significant deliveries and have DOT type signage that may be modified coming into Port Clyde, advising limited satellite parking is available at the fire station, or wherever, so that short term rentals could let their guests know. Businesses could let the renters know to go to the town website. It'll be up to date about what's going on down there. Then we'd communicate better.

**Erb**

We could probably rent one of the electronic signs if we wanted to make changes to the message.

**Conrad**

I think that'd be really worthwhile.

**Thompson**

I suggest that we have a continuing discussion this coming Monday.

**Conrad**

I think everybody should encourage those business owners to weigh in now. Let's not wait till the Fourth of July to be all up in arms.

**Carr**

Some of that is going to happen regardless of how much outreach we do. The Harbor Committee has done it for years.

**Elwell**

There are going to be informational weekly meetings once the project gets going.

**Carr**

For the public?

**Elwell**

Yes, for the project. That way if they're running behind, we can get it posted. I wonder if the Business Alliance could help.

**Conrad**

I think we should have this on our agenda for every meeting. The June 26th meeting is right before everything hits the fan. Is there any advantage to having a second sign that would be farther up the peninsula?

**Erb**

I hear that suggestion and I think it has some value. I've sort of puzzled over what it would say. I don't want to post there's no parking. That's not true, and businesses don't want us to post that, but I guess you're just giving them an idea of what they are getting themselves into.

**Conrad**

With big trucks, even if they're only there for an hour unloading long pieces of steel, how are people going to turn around?

**Carr**

I know the workers from the boat lines help people turn around even if it's not their customer.

**Status of Current Programs and Projects**

**Erb**

Particularly for the new members, just to update you on some things that are a work in progress, there are approximately a dozen tax acquired properties. We have received proposals from five local real estate agents to list anything the board decides to sell. We have not selected one yet. Van is going to review them with me. There is ongoing discussion with the Community Development Corporation on the property at Kinney woods, potentially to be used for workforce affordable housing. They're looking at it further and will get back to us.

**Conrad**

I was at the meeting with Rob Kelly, and the woman who was also presenting when they spoke. They were thinking that ideally there would be a proposal that could be voted on in November. That seems like a long way away, but it isn't. I'm hoping they will keep us informed on anything we need to be evaluating, so we have lots of time for input.

**Erb**

The good news is that they are keenly aware of the deadline.

**Thompson**

They are following up on the properties that are being looked at in terms of what they could be used for, so we should hear something soon.

**Elwell**

They were going to get a survey.

**Thompson**

They looked at it, but now they have to formerly survey it.

**Conrad**

In the news today there was a story about state funding for affordable housing, and whether there is going to be additional money available that could help support that. I wasn't completely clear to me. The CDC is taking a leading role, but I believe the property is owned by the town now, so it'd be a working relationship.

**Erb**

That's what we've talked about. They are able to do that kind of legwork and advocate. The town is supportive of the concept and has the property and that's pretty much how we have delineated the responsibilities.

**Conrad**

It's in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Thompson**

Randy, you mentioned another piece of land there.

**Elwell**

Yes, it was part of the Kinney family property.

**Thompson**

Did that get resolved?

**Elwell**

It is owned by the town.

**Thompson**

That's another one that I don't know whether they looked at that or not. It could expand it.

**Elwell**

And it's on higher ground.



**Loreen Myer**

At our last meeting for the Housing Committee, which was last Tuesday I believe, mentioned that they were waiting to hear whether that property was owned by the town. I don't know what has happened since last Tuesday, but they were waiting to hear whether it was definitively owned by the town because they're keenly interested in looking at it if it is.

**Elwell**

It is.

**Loreen Myer**

I'll pass that on.

**Erb**

Rob Kelly and I have kept in touch, but not in the last couple of weeks, so let me get back to him. Just a couple other things. You remember we had a presentation on aquaculture. Last meeting. There was a group that is working with the shell fishing industry that may be proposing a moratorium on the future aquaculture initiatives. They are not scheduled to meet with the board for your next meeting but possibly after that. I also understand our own shellfish committee is doing its own study of the issues. You're going to hear more about that but not at the next meeting and I want everybody to understand that.

**Elwell**

Dave Taylor wants to come. We told him once we are situated with the new board members, we would get him on the agenda.

**Erb**

I have a few more things. At your next meeting, I'll have the agreement that the state has proposed for us to provide the winter maintenance on route 131, which continues to be a good deal for the town.

I was contacted by Spectrum cable TV people, and apparently their franchise agreement expired a couple of years ago, and I have a copy of the proposed agreement. Somewhere along the way that slipped through the cracks.

We talked about revaluation and the fact that we are slipping behind on values in town. From everything that I can see, anyone that would be available to do that work for us would probably start no sooner than 2025 and would complete it in 2026. I'm wondering if we should be going out for proposals so we can get in line with rapid changes in property values. Way more communities are going to need a revaluation than you would expect in any such similar timeframe. I think we're going to be looking at getting proposals in. The first numbers I heard are pretty high, roughly projected to be more than \$100,000 more than what we would have in our reserve. I talked to a few more valuation companies or appraisers that do that work and I was a little more encouraged that we're at least in the ballpark. Obviously, it needs its

own agenda item for further discussion, but I don't think we should waste much more time waiting for somebody to get on board.

**Conrad**

How often do towns typically do a revaluation?

**Elwell**

St. George's did one about every ten years.

**Conrad**

How long has it been?

**Thompson**

It's been over ten years.

**Cartwright**

Weren't there some adjustments we needed to make this year that were to our advantage?

**Erb**

The way that they're calculated.

**Cartwright**

Do we need to do anything as a board on that?

**Erb**

Not now. You voted last meeting. One thing that we probably will be discussing is what is known as an update, instead of a revaluation, and that becomes more of a mathematical exercise. We did it in Kennebunk, where we had a portion of the town that was increasing more rapidly than other portions of the town, but properties were all going up and we adjusted everyone's values accordingly. It's not nearly as precise as a revaluation, but it will buy time. If we think it's important to improve our quality ratio on what our valuations are compared to sales, that is a quick fix.

**Conrad**

The question would be a cost comparison. How much do you save and how soon would we have to do a full revaluation anyway. Would it make sense to go ahead and do it as a quick fix?

**Erb**

That is the question. The last thing that I have here is the warrant for the school budget, referendum and has places for your signatures. I see it still has Richard Bates and Wayne Sawyer's names on it. I would suggest you sign it; it only needs three signatures.

## **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Cartwright, seconded by Conrad, to adjourn the Select Board meeting, and by a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Taylor  
Recording Secretary  
Town of St. George, Maine