

**ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS**  
**St. George Town Office**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 7, 2023**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Steve Cartwright, Rick Erb, Wendy Carr, Jane Conrad, Randy Elwell, Irene Ames, Van Thompson, Butch Taylor, Helen Bickford, Steve Taylor, David Taylor, Brian Lewis, Gabrielle Hillyer and Kelsey Woodhead

Via Zoom: Present was Loreen Meyer.

**Quorum**

A quorum was present.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

Presentation from the Shellfish Committee was moved to the beginning of the agenda.

**Presentation from the Shellfish Committee**

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

My name is Gabby Hillyer. I recently graduated with my doctorate from the University of Maine Orno, and I have been working with the Georges River Shellfish Committee for the last few years, trying to figure out a few different things about the river. I am here to introduce the research that we have been able to do on the Georges River. I have been working closely with Dr. Lauren Ross, who is also at the university. We started in 2018. The shellfish community here in the St. Georges River has been facing a lot of different challenges from increased pollution closures. In the state of Maine, to protect consumers, they close various areas flagged with bacterial pollution. The committee has been working to clean it up and is doing an enormous amount of work to find out what is going on in the river and open up new areas for supporting shellfish harvester livelihoods in the future. I was approached to try and help support that.

Originally, they had a conditionally restricted area in the bay. The bay was important because it had a lot of shellfish and was very productive, but it was conditionally restricted, which means that the pollution that was there was impacting harvesters' ability to access that space and instead was held by declaration companies which do not include your everyday shellfish harvester. My goal was to model the bay and

the rest of the river to understand how water was moving pollution around and what work we could do with the state in order to reopen that area, or at least get it conditionally approved, which means harvesters can access that area. The committee had already been doing a lot of testing, so that is definitely playing a part in the reopening of the bay. Part of our oceanographic model shows how the river is moving. It has to be ground truth, which means it needs a lot of data to show what is actually happening.

We did a drifter bucket study where we went out and put these drifter buckets in the water. They are able to float in and around the water and show us how the water at the surface is moving. We were able to observe those currents in a variety of different tidal stages which would impact how fast the water is going. We also use an ADCP or Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler, a fancy term for something that is basically shooting sound waves up and down the river and is able to track how the river and water is moving at depth.

Combining these two data sources, we are able to get a much clearer picture of how the water is moving and therefore how pollution or clams or other environmental factors are shaping this river. We went through and collected all these different datasets. Some show how the salty water is coming in and how fresh water is going out, as well as the various velocities. It basically shows the water switching directions. We are using a much broader model to start answering some of these questions.

This full model domain uses eleven rivers, tidal schemes and wind. It's very three dimensional where the water that is coming off of the Adamic or other areas is also shaping the model that we're using. We are trying to get this as environmentally realistic as possible. Our focus area is the Georges River. It is a pretty straight river even though it's kind of leaning crooked, which means that water once it's able to get to the channel is able to flow out. However, in areas that are shallower, like mud flats, we see areas where water is spinning around and staying for quite a long time. These calculations are the plotting of various velocities from the drifter buckets or from the ADCP. We are trying to get a very accurate picture of what we're seeing happening in the environment.

### **Cartwright**

Can you explain what is being measured?

### **Gabrielle Hillyer**

This is the water level, so basically tidal height. It is how fast the drifter buckets were moving on these days in April, and making sure that everything is as accurate as possible.

This slide shows the water moving in and out, and you can see how the water moves in and spreads out along the bay and creates this gyre circular pattern. Similarly, this is another video that would show you how the water comes in and out of the tide, but also changes along the bottom. You can see how the tides progress over time, which shapes the bay. There are a couple of key spots where we see what we

call entrapment, and what that means is that water is spinning in that area, so it's not going in and out with the tide but remaining there, and that means that clams or plant larvae or other things that are going to be in those surface waters will stay there, which is great, because that means that shellfish will grow and proliferate there. What that also means though, is that pollution also remains in that area for longer periods of time. These are the kinds of dynamics that we are grappling with.

This is a salinity model, which shows you where the ocean is coming in versus freshwater from the river. The St. George River has great salinity for intertidal species like shellfish, oysters etc., but it is also very fresh, which means that it is susceptible to bacteria. So, despite the Georges River Shellfish Committee's efforts to turn off any incoming pollution or bacteria that is there, it will stay there for a longer period than expected.

The other thing that we calculated, which I think helps support the reopening and reclassification of the bay, was how long it takes water to get to the bay from the Warren Sanitary Plant. It is over ten hours, which means that state was able to use that information in order to reclassify the bay because it met their legal boundary of how long water could come from a sanitary treatment plant. Because of the length of time, they would be able to close the bay to any harvesting before bacteria got there, if there was an issue with the treatment plant, and the only reason they know that is because of this model.

**Conrad**

Can you tell us where that plant is?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Warren, I believe, a few miles upriver from the bay, along the Georges River.

**David Taylor**

The treatment plant itself has a lagoon system around the Oyster River and is behind the prison farm. They use ultraviolet lights to clean the water which is supposed to put out clean water.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Based on all the testing that the state has done, they do but if there was a malfunction, they want to be able to communicate effectively and close it in time and we've calculated they have enough time. We did a very large test of how long particles can remain in the Georges River. There are some limitations to this test because of the way the model works. The particles have to stay wet, which means they can't stay in tidal areas that will get dry over time. But the big reason we did this is to showcase that there is a long enough residence time, where the water stays in the estuary for long enough that shellfish can settle out, which means that over time shellfish, primarily softshell clams, and so on will stay in the river and proliferate. The big thing here, at least in our opinion, is that the limitation on shellfish harvesting is really centered more around the bacterial closures, rather than the lack of population, but they have to balance out. Those particles remain in the Georges River for a long period of time. The committee has

been doing a lot to clean up the river and I want to really highlight that not only does that mean that shellfish harvesters get to access the river, but it's safer for things like swimming and safer for things like any recreation as well as a lot of other fisheries and aquaculture and others.

#### **Question 1 - Carr**

Are you trying to address where the nonpoint sources are?

#### **Gabrielle Hillyer**

David Taylor has done a lot of work on finding some of those point sources as well as tracking those through the rivers. The bigger issue here is that I am able to track a big point flag and determine what area it most likely came from, but I don't always have that data.

#### **Cartwright**

What are your thoughts about where the bacteria are coming from?

#### **Gabrielle Hillyer**

That is not an area I'm working on. I am not doing the testing. That would be DMR Water Quality.

#### **Question 2**

Is the bacteria count low? You said it hangs around for quite a while.

#### **Gabrielle Hillyer**

It does hang around for a while because of the salinity. That is what we believe. We know that it is low enough or clean enough to be conditionally approved. The Bay has been recently reclassified. I cannot remember the exact colony count. Unless there is an influx of freshwater, which generally carries bacteria, harvesters can access that space as much as they need.

#### **Question 3**

What about the flushing of this river?

#### **Gabrielle Hillyer**

The flushing of this river is interesting. There are a couple of different dynamics happening at the same time. The first is that any water that can make it to the channel is probably gone within a day or two. You will see it when you're standing on the bay at low tide. It empties out and looks pretty barren and there's a lot of exposed mudflats. We also know that the water in those tiny little areas that are much shallower along the edges is keeping water for a longer period of time, up to two weeks, so any minor point sources that are along that river will stay for a while, but what's also important is that shellfish that are spawning there will settle out. There are two dynamics happening at the same time.

#### **Question 4**

Did this occur in April?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

We did a lot of studies both in April, October and November and parts of May.

**Question 5**

Are there more bacteria in summer because the water is warmer?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Again, I am not the person who specializes in bacteria.

**Question 6**

Would it throw off your tests because it's warmer?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Definitely. The big thing that we were focused on is what are the worst possible conditions. In April, you have the most freshwater coming into the area and the most storms; a lot of closures happen at that time. Then there is another pulse later in the year in fall. This summer has been very wacky where we have had horrible weather throughout but normally it follows that pattern. We followed that test to show what are the worst-case scenarios and do calculations on that. If we were going to be looking at this in a more moderate month when it is warmer, bacteria could proliferate for a longer period of time, but the bigger thing is that the water would also be moving less because the river flow would be smaller.

The main thing here is that we can start to have a predictable picture of what this would look like under different tidal conditions and storm conditions. We are starting to work on what precipitation could look like here which has been a fun computer experiment.

**Conrad**

Is it the state that does the closures?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Yes, the Department of Marine Resources test relatively frequently across various stations within the river. Based on those annual tests, they reclassify what areas look like. It is not just based on the test from one year, but it is actually an annual conglomeration of a variety of tests over five years. To shift this line takes a lot of work and I am here to show how the river is moving. A lot of these reclassifications are not based on the model work, but on the work that the Shellfish Committee has been doing for a long time and the kind of monitoring work that the DMR has been doing.

**Cartwright**

Is there a trend? Is the river getting cleaner?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Yes. That is why there is a reopening of the conditionally restricted areas.

**Question 7**

Does the current data show the seed staying harder in the river because of the current?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Yes. We think that there are certain areas where clams are spawning out. We think that they are settling in those same areas. Our model was able to show what happens if shellfish were in or around the channel. When they are in those shallower areas, we think the residence time is much longer, which means that the shellfish would be able to settle out there. Right now, we are seeing an average residence time under prime flushing tidal conditions to be less than a week, but we know that's based on the idea that all of the water is in the channel because of the limitations of computers at this time. David has access to a more formatted version of this presentation and can share it with you.

**Thompson**

Could we have a URL to get us to the website?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Right now, this is not on a website. I am building that right now. I have cards with my email. You are welcome to email me.

**Thompson**

It would be nice if the community could access this. I will try and follow up with you on that through David.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

I have a page that will be working soon and can link it to the website.

<https://themudflat.org/thomaston-st-george-river-resilience-project/>

In this slide, the water quality team noticed that there's an area which still has slightly elevated bacterial scores. That is mostly driven by the fact that more water is coming in and staying there than going out.

**Conrad**

Do we know where that is?

**Cartwright**

That is Hospital Point.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

It is always a double-edged sword. You want the residence time to be high enough that clams are settling out but not so high that bacteria are piling up. What is nice is that in areas where bacteria may be proliferating because it does not get that nice oceanic flush, clams will still be there spawning out as many clams as possible.

The reason I said 20 - 35% of your scene is because you have this perfectly wonderful straight river and that means that any water that is getting into this deeper channel is rushing straight out with an outgoing tide. With different spawning events under different tidal regimes that number is going to fluctuate, and I'd also say that my approximation is probably really limited because I'm basing this on what the computer is telling me. The computer can only put particles in places that stay wet the whole time, which means that if there is a lot of spawning on those nice little edges where water takes a long time to drain out, they may be staying there for a lot longer. We know in general there are many places along the coast of Maine where you have higher residence times based on the shape of the river and that's unfortunately not something that can really be changed.

**Conrad**

Is this the first time this sort of data has been collected for the Georges River?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Yes.

**Conrad**

So, we do not know about the past.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

No, but there is historical data around bacteria. There's historical data around surveys, that in terms of the oceanographic model, this is the first time it has been built for this river.

**Thompson**

Nicely done. I appreciate it.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

I will be moving on to a different position next year but my colleague who works at the University of Maine will be there.

**Thompson**

Is that Lauren Ross?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Yes, she will be hopefully updating this and is happy to collect more data and run different tests.

**Elwell**

As David Taylor does tests, will this be updated?

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

David will be working closely with both of us.

**Elwell**

It would be interesting to map the bacteria coming out of various farms, and so forth, to see what the major contributing factors are.

**David Taylor**

I always get dog in my DNA tests, which has a lot of E. coli.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Which can easily spike a test and based on a five-year average, if you have a really high score, that can greatly impact your overall average.

On this slide, the way that this works, all these little blue dots are what we call particles, and they are able to move one cubic foot of water or cubic meter of water. If you were to tell me there are this many bacteria in this many cubic feet of water at this point, which is based on the kind of density count of coliform scores, I can put that many particles in the river, and then we can see where they go. I know Lauren would be really excited to work on this in the future and I may end up back here working on this.

**Elwell**

When you come in to clean up the river, it shows where your high points are, and where communities need to work on better public awareness, and you can see what your community is doing.

**Gabrielle Hillyer**

In terms of visuals, it can be powerful. I also know that the DMR tracks where those spikes may be. I know Brian Lewis has been doing a lot of work on that. In terms of visuals of this model, I know Lauren and I are happy to help. I am building the webpage. It should hopefully be up in the next two weeks. I am happy to share it and it'll have some videos on it as well as links to the files that that David has.

**Thompson**

Well, thank you Gabrielle. I look forward to that.



**Gabrielle Hillyer**

Thank you.

**David Taylor**

The two that do the testing for the state are Brian Lewis and Kelsey Woodhead.

**Cartwright**

Did either of you want to say anything about this tonight?

**Brian Lewis**

This has been a really good collaboration in a bigger sense, not just the project she's working on, but what DMR has been doing with the Regional Shellfish Committee, and Gabrielle's involvement. That was really the work of the Regional Shellfish Committee because of the pollution issues in the river. It has been a good success story so far, and having this is a great tool for the Shellfish Committee when they are targeting those areas with high scores and have to close something. Scores do not tell a story. We just know there is a problem, but this lets us work backwards,

**Thompson**

This is something we need to work on from a communications perspective within the community itself, in terms of identifying, for instance, our problem with pets and what should be done because of its effect on the river and the effect on bacterial counts.

**David Taylor**

We are a five-town community. We all need to look at water quality.

**Thompson**

We need to take a global view. I would like to make the community more aware. Thank you for coming.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Conflict of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest.

## **Minutes**

On a motion from Cartwright, seconded by Elwell, the Select Board July 24, 2023 Minutes were approved as corrected, and by a 5-0 vote the motion carried.

## **Communications**

### **Thompson**

A letter was sent to Steve, Rick, Terry and myself relative to the Smith vs. Smith activities along the Harts Neck area, and I think that's something, that in general discussions, the Smiths have to resolve on their own. Are there any comments along those lines?

### **Elwell**

It has been going on for a long time.

### **Erb**

Where the Shipyard Rd. right of way begins and ends, a survey has been done by a respected surveyor. I have not seen it yet. That may be enough information once we have it. It is not Jim Dorsky, but one of the other Smith family that has a problem with what is happening here. Jim Dorsky has his own surveyor, so I feel like between the two licensed surveyors, we ought to be able to figure this out without having to hire yet another surveyor.

### **Thompson**

That may help establish whether there is a problem there or not, from our point of view of the town.

### **Carr**

Does it relate to taxes?

### **Erb**

It is about access to a piece of property.

### **Carr**

Why did they reach out to us?

### **Erb**

These objects had been placed in the town's right of way and would impede emergency response there.

### **Elwell**

This battle has been going on for years and they are bringing the town into it.

## **Warrant**

### **Thompson**

I glanced at it and did not have a problem with what was sent.

### **Conrad**

You sent us two warrants so I'm not sure which one is correct.

### **Thompson**

The second one was the correct one.

### **Ames**

The second one has an additional set of invoices that were paid. Rick is going to be out the rest of the week, so Tara did the Accounts Payable. She usually waits until Wednesday, but she did them today. After she was done with those, I sent an updated warrant.

### **Conrad**

My question is regarding the GL account Mission Square. Is that a retirement fund payment?

### **Erb**

International City Managers Association Fund.

### **Ames**

A little over half of that is employee contributions withheld from employee's checks.

### **Erb**

You will see that every month.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Planning Committee - Carr**

#### **Carr**

Last meeting, two more docks were approved pending approval by the Army Corps of Engineers, and/or DEP. The cell tower application remains pending, and the Planning Board asked all kinds of good questions in terms of the need for a new tower, the fall zone, and access to where the tower is going to be. The tower company sent a balloon up in the air and took photographs to show where the tower would be and Chair Cox pointed out that the photos were done at a certain time of year when all the leaves are down, and it will look very different when the tower is visible. She asked him to go back and

run it again because I think it is a computer program. The person was very affable and said that they would gather all this information and appear again.

### **Board of Appeals - Conrad**

#### **Conrad**

The Board of Appeals met recently for an organizational meeting and elected a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

### **Budget Committee – Thompson**

#### **Thompson**

We need two alternates and are just starting that search. We are going to do a little recruitment.

### **Resiliency Committee – Thompson**

On August 12<sup>th</sup>, we have the Green Tour. We are looking forward to people getting involved and seeing what we are doing at the various sites. Terry Bennett from Sebago Technics is wanting to know where we are on setting priorities on various areas they have shown need mitigation, but many people have been on vacation, and I've not been able to really do much on it.

#### **Conrad**

What will be the process for making those judgments?

#### **Thompson**

It will come before the Board in time. The idea would be that can we provide him some guidance so they can focus on timeframes. They are just going to come up with some potentials.

#### **Conrad**

But first, don't you have to identify the places that have the greatest risk?

#### **Thompson**

We have done that, essentially. Most immediately, is what is being done in Port Clyde, and on Factory Road, along with the priority that was established for the Drift Inn Beach. Those are the two areas that they are going to concentrate on and show visuals for. The other areas, we think could be done based upon the chart that we created where we tried to lay out what could be done to ameliorate the problem based upon the floods expected in those timeframes. It will give us some guidance so people can visualize what is going on. The decisions about when and how anything might be done is a matter of

looking for grants as we proceed. It may take seed money from the town, and we would make sure that everybody knew about and voted on it before we do it.

**Elwell**

The Town Manager and the Road Commissioner will determine when roads need to be ready.

**Thompson**

Part of it is dealing with the state on Route 131. It was important to give them some guidance on the two projects to come up with what we think can be done in various times and what should be done. That is what we'll present to the community.

**Comprehensive Planning Committee - Conrad**

**Conrad**

I received a call last week from Amy Morey, who had been on the committee and had agreed to continue, but she called and said she really isn't able to serve so she resigned, even though we haven't had any meetings yet. I spoke to Leticia vanVuuren about her willingness to serve. She works for the Knox County Emergency Management as the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager and has a master's degree in geographic information technology and has lived in St. George for over five years and would be willing to serve. There is no conflict because even though the data that would be collected could be part of her job for the county, we're not going to be paying the county for that. It is a government resource. She is a young person in our community with knowledge and expertise.

A motion was made by Conrad, seconded by Elwell, to nominate Leticia vanVuuren as member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and by a 5-0 vote, the motion carried.

**Conrad**

I've talked to three more business owners who have declined to serve, because they're busy. Let me know if there are any business owners you know of because I really would like the fifth full member spot to be someone who has a business other than aquaculture as we already have that covered. Van and I are meeting tomorrow with Meg Rasmussen and Max Johnstone from MCOG to talk about an overview of the Comprehensive Plan process. I think we will have our first meeting in September, whether we're fully staffed or not.

**Thompson**

Along those lines, it came up and will come up with the Harbor Committee, we'd like very much to get involved with the Comprehensive Planning Committee in terms of what is happening or laying out what's going to happen down there in the Cold Storage Road Project, also known as the Port Clyde Landing.

**Conrad**

Earlier this afternoon, I went to an Island Institute event that was at the East Wind Inn. They were saying that they have people who have served as resources for planning. I made sure to get cards because we want to corral as many resources as we can for this process. We will be moving forward shortly.

**Conservation Committee - Cartwright****Cartwright**

I missed the most recent meeting, but I do know that the trail work continues. It looks fantastic. I do not know how many of you have seen it down there, but the Fort Point Trail is going to be great and will go all the way up. There will be a picnic area down there, and hopefully no more vandalism, and on that note, I have some bad news. From personal observation at the Roaring Spout, which was the original George's River Land Trust easement, on the cliffs out there that you can walk to, there's graffiti all over. There is red paint and four-letter words, and it is gross. I do not understand. It makes you think what is wrong with people. All my life, summering here, there was never anything down there. A few years ago, somebody painted a lot of crap there. Hunter Hastings, a young guy from Harts Neck, and I went out there and spray painted over it. We spray painted gray paint over it to try to blend it and then some brown paint. It came out okay. We chipped off some of it and tried burning it off too but that did not work well. We could not blast it off. It is very discouraging to see big letters all over the rock.

**Conrad**

Did the sheriff's department put monitoring cameras at Fort Point; weren't they thinking of doing that?

**Erb**

I do not think so; there was some discussion about that.

**Cartwright**

I wonder if a cam should be set up.

**Elwell**

It is going around everywhere including the Laurel Libby School.

**Conrad**

I was thinking about Fort Point and other trails in town as places where we could put signs up about dog waste contamination as a starting point.

**Conrad**

It is an educational opportunity and that is a good town role.

## **Shellfish Committee - Elwell**

### **Elwell**

I missed the last two months because something came up but next month they meet.

## **Town Manager Report**

### **Erb**

There will be a meeting of the Shelter Committee on Friday at nine o'clock. We are waiting to hear from someone named Randy to see if they can have it at the school. I will not be able to attend. I have not been going to those. If there were any members of the Board who are interested in that meeting or continuing to meet with them, Tim Polky pulls them together on a regular basis, but they are getting ready for potential fall storms.

### **Elwell**

The models are showing a potential for hurricanes or major storms coming up the East Coast.

### **Thompson**

This evening at three o'clock they closed a bunch of the government buildings and sent everyone home in D.C. and Virginia.

### **Erb**

The meeting is at nine o'clock on Friday at the school.

Paving was done today at Barter Hill Road and Wiley's Corner Road and after we get past the rain forecast for tomorrow, we'll work on Cline Road and a short stretch called Work Road. We will be done after that. So far, everything is good.

Tax bills are being printed right now and could go out as soon as Wednesday. I did put the information from Van and Jane regarding the mill rate on the town's website. It looked great.

LD 1706 was the bill that was passed by the legislature as the follow up to LD2003 which was the housing legislation and it postponed the requirement for the towns to be in compliance, if you're a town meeting town, until July 1, 2024. It does have to be done and should be ready for the May town meeting. I had a conversation with Bill Kelly. I understand there is state money to comply. The idea was for the Town Attorney to go through our ordinances and identify what needs to be changed to come into compliance if we could get money for that. Bill's point to me was it really is more than that. It is going to take some decision making on the town's part on what to do. It is not as simple as changes being requested resulting in compliance. I have not had much more discussion yet with the Planning Board,

but just to let you know there is some work that needs to be done and it's hard in summer. We are really going to have to get started on that so we're ready by next May.

**Thompson**

To be in compliance, the Town would have to have voted on the changes.

**Erb**

Some of you may be aware that the parking lot referred to as the Field of Dreams was something that the Planning Board was reviewing but at some point, the application was withdrawn. There have been a few cars parked there on Sundays. Sometimes only two or three but sometimes a little more. Working with Terry, the applicant withdrew the application and to me that means that they should not be using this as a parking lot. That was the word that was given to Greg Holland. On Sunday, there were two trucks that were there blocking it to keep people from using it. Sundays is their most popular entertainment day so there were quite a few vehicles there. Any that were parked along Route 131 were parked on the outside of the white line, so it was not terribly difficult to get through but still there were a lot of cars, and a lot of activity. The post office lot was full, and I saw there were quite a few also parked at the Odd Fellows. This is still going to be an issue and may be the most extreme example because this band really does draw many more people than the other ones. If anybody happens to go by, take a look.

**Thompson**

I was pleased that everybody was parked outside the white lines.

**Elwell**

My concern was someone stepping out in front of a car.

**Erb**

I would say they did a pretty good job with the number of cars that they were trying to park there.

**Cartwright**

The Odd Fellows is on private land.

**Erb**

And they do have signs.

**Cartwright**

Parking on Sundays at the post office is probably fine although other people might want to mail a letter.



**Thompson**

The post office recently put a sign up, not about the Town or Greg, but with the fact that there were people parking to go kayaking or sailing and would be gone for days. There is a car in our parking lot with Indiana plates that has been there over a week and has not moved.

**Funding for the Kinney Woods Property Survey**

**Cartwright**

My understanding is the St. George Community Development (CDC) is currently having a survey done to see what's buildable and what should be left undeveloped. This is going to cost \$5,000. Do we want to consider a show of commitment, partnering with them to make affordable housing in our town, since I think we'd all agree that's an issue for us. We need to have more workforce housing, etc.

**Thompson**

Sharing the costs with the CDC?

**Cartwright**

Yes, splitting the cost of this survey with the CDC. They are going to do it anyway, but I thought this would show a commitment by the town that we want to see this go forward and I did not think it was a whole lot of money. They must raise all their money from private donations. The money has to come from somewhere, as does our money, and Rick said there is a fund we could draw the money from.

**Erb**

I did, although I also was saying that it is the account that we pay for legal fees out of. In the first month we are spending money at a more rapid rate than we were. It is interesting. The hourly rate for our legal fees has dropped significantly from what we paid when we were with Bernstein Shur, however, the number of hours is increasing. It is just the number of items, but it is only a month.

**Cartwright**

What is the balance in the account?

**Erb**

It was \$20,000 to start with, and we have spent \$3,649 in the month of July.

**Conrad**

At the last meeting, we heard from Rob Kelley and had an update on the Kinney Woods project. We asked him what it would cost the town if we went ahead and transferred this property and did the development and he said the only cost would be sharing the survey. Other than transferring the property and having this built, there really is not going to be a cost to the town.

**Thompson**

You are agreeing that in terms of a gesture this would be good?

**Conrad**

Right. Given that we don't anticipate other expenses for something we're all committed to.

**Ames**

My understanding was the property was tax acquired.

**Elwell**

John Kinney gave it to the Town. The piece where the town trail is on the other side of the road, that abuts it, was tax acquired years ago.

**Ames**

There are a lot of legal fees coming up. I am a little skeptical. For a lot of the tax acquired properties, we are going to have to consult with a lawyer.

**Cartwright**

That is a separate issue.

**Ames**

It is but the money is coming out of the same allotment.

**Elwell**

Is there another account it could come out of?

**Erb**

This is referred to as Professional Services. I could not find something else that fit adequately.

**Elwell**

It is early on. I do not want to get hit by legal fees. We have a heavy year of legal fees.

**Erb**

We have a fund balance.

**Ames**

We cannot just take it out of the fund balance because it's something we want to spend.

**Cartwright**

If there was some drastic situation, we could take it.

**Ames**

This is not necessarily a drastic situation.

**Conrad**

He means if there were a legal drastic situation where we needed more money.

**Ames**

I'm not sure that \$20,000 is going to be enough.

**Conrad**

I would agree that we're going to need more than that.

**Erb**

I think times have changed. I was hopeful with a significant hourly rate reduction that we could get by this year. I do not know now.

**Conrad**

Based on tonight's discussions, it is clear we have potential legal ramifications for which we will need advice, so I think it's very possible, regardless of this issue, that we're going to need to figure out how to have more in the legal professional services account.

**Elwell**

What about the Conservation Committee?

**Conrad**

We are talking about developing it, not conserving it.

**Ames**

They are asking us to give them eighty acres.

**Elwell**

I do not think we need to transfer the deed to the whole property, just what they can use.

**Cartwright**

It is not for the CDC; it is for affordable housing for families.

**Ames**

When I asked them how many families from St. George were on their waiting list, the answer was none.

**Conrad**

With the Habitat house, people did not meet the criteria. It was not that they weren't trying to work with people.

**Elwell**

It brings families into town.

**Ames**

It brings families into town and brings children into an already stressed school system.

A motion was made by Cartwright, seconded by Conrad, to pay for half of the expense for the Kinney Woods property survey which equates to \$2500, and by a 4-1 vote, the motion carried.

**Erb**

I will let Rob Kelley know.

**Port Clyde Landing Project**

**Erb**

The Harbor Committee met last week, and they are scheduled to meet again Thursday. I sent around their minutes because it was a nice summary of what they did. They are close to deciding on whether to recommend three phase power. The majority of the committee does want to see three phase brought in. There is concern about cost. We are waiting to hear back from Central Maine power. I met with them on the site and hopefully we will have something from them soon. We have a ballpark figure, which would be a little less than \$150,000 for the CMP cost. The biggest cost is bringing it from the corner down to the site. There will then be a smaller cost with CPM, our contractor, which is around \$30,000.

**Conrad**

Do you think the total is going to be \$180,000?

**Erb**

Yes, somewhere in that area.

**Elwell**

During that meeting, Van mentioned that with future going the way it is, with three phase you're able to have EV chargers. The three phase makes sense.

**Conrad**

On the news tonight, there was a story about the first electric boat that the Island Institute has running out of Rockland, and they were discussing this as the future and there will be chargers.

**Thompson**

What was brought up at that meeting is the change in the technology, particularly the batteries. It is changing quite a bit compared to lithium and it's going to make a big difference.

**Erb**

They spent quite a bit of time talking about that. On smaller issues, there have been questions from Greg Johnston, the engineer. He had concerns about the float design and what was proposed by CPM. (Inaudible) and Ryan Cline work with him. Hopefully by the meeting on Thursday, that will be straightened out. They are also waiting for final designs on hoists that will be installed there. Also, you recall there was discussion and there has been pricing obtained on the walkway to the float. We will be losing the parking spaces that are adjacent to the floats in about two weeks, maybe three weeks from now. The committee did talk for a while about whether we still want to put the walkway in. There is a proposal from CPM. I do not have the details but understand it will be less cumbersome. There will not be jersey barriers and the fencing will be less money. The committee did decide that they still think it is worthwhile to install the walkway in order to get us through the rest of the season. The last remaining question was they asked us to check with CPM and make sure that they are comfortable with the foot safety aspect of having a walkway application. I think that if they had a problem, they would have already said so, but we can confirm that. Finally, we meet on Thursday of this week, and although I know there is going to be some construction project discussion, they want to spend more time on beginning develop a plan for the facility.

**Thompson**

They will come back to us for further guidance on how they're going to use the facility.

**Erb**

Noel Mussen has agreed that he will work as a mediator and will lead the discussion.

**Elwell**

When the engineer looked at our float design, because it gets a lot of weather, felt they weren't good enough. He will work with Ryan and Dave Szymanski to come up with a more rugged design able to take the pounding down there because it's open to the weather.

**Erb**

We do have one other important issue. I heard this early on in the process and somewhere along the line it did not get done. The EDA, the federal agency providing the grant, requires a mortgage agreement between the town and EDA. It basically would require any transport or conveyance of the project

property or any portion thereof to have prior written approval by the EDA. If we want their \$3.5 million, we have to do this.

**Thompson**

Please sign off on it.

**Erb**

Okay. I will do that tomorrow.

### **Town Meeting Rooms**

**Thompson**

I wanted to update you where we are. The configuration you are going to see downstairs now will have space for the owl, a center table a little narrower than the current one, a new table that is about six feet with the owl sitting in the same spot as it is now. We will be across from one another or at the end. You will have a screen and the TV in this room will be downstairs, and we are looking to buy a slightly larger one for up here. It is run by a new computer that was \$499. We have one downstairs as well. We have a new owl downstairs.

**Thompson**

There's room for quite a few people down there. As soon as we get rid of the ladders that remain down there and other cleanup, it will be ready to go. We are waiting for the two tables. One to support the television and the computer down there. We have tried to keep the cost to a minimum. I was told when I began the project, we had the money for it. We will have to double check whether we still do.

**Erb**

I have been taking it from the office equipment reserve.

**Thompson**

The total amount for everything is less than \$2,500.

### **Sign Documents Related to Appointments and Tax Assessments**

**Erb**

We have appointments to sign for. I removed the one for Amy Morey. I have appointments for Allison Fongemie, Jim Balano and Antonia Small for the Comprehensive Planning Committee.

**Conrad**

We already voted. It is just the paperwork.

**Erb**

You recall that we signed the certificate of assessment and return to useful treasurer. Bob Gingras, the assessor's agent, was here with his associates and did their work. There was a very minor change of about \$1,000 to sign for.

Speaking of the assessors, there is a small abatement made by Bob Gingras regarding 114 River Road. It was listed as a finished attic and is replaced by an unfinished attic and removal of gas fixtures. It is not a very big adjustment. It is \$120.49 and \$2.01 in interest.

### **Liquor License for Catered Event at 306 Harts Neck Rd.**

**Erb**

We have the caterers liquor license that people have been wondering about at 306 Harts Neck Road. (Inaudible)

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Cartwright, to approve the liquor license for the one-time catered event at 306 Harts Neck Rd, and by a 5-0 vote, the motion carried.

**Conrad**

Do we have any guidance about catering permits for single events?

**Carr**

Are they selling liquor? My understanding is if they are just serving it, you do not need a license.

**Conrad**

I tried to look it up. I could not figure it out.

### **Solid Waste Hauling Bids**

**Erb**

We opened bids on Tuesday of last week. This is for hauling waste, MSW or municipal solid waste, which is basically house trash and demolition debris. The house trash is compacted. The demolition debris goes into open hut containers and is not very compacted, sometimes with a backhoe but very little. They both are hauled to the same place. They go to the landfill in Norridgewock. Aaron Grendel is the (Inaudible) the contract for some time. I was hopeful that we would have at least three and possibly

four bids, but we ended up with two. Scott Johnson and Aaron Grendel. We had inquiries from a couple other people, but they decided not to bid. We have had the contract with Aaron Grendel for a while. There is a base cost for that. When diesel fuel went above \$3 a gallon, which was quite a while ago, there was an additional surcharge on top of that, so really, we have been paying roughly \$560 per trip to Norridgewock. The contract expired a while ago, but we are allowed to continue to contract for a period of time, although that would be running out. Prices are higher than what we have been paying. Grendel's bid for the MSW was \$680 per load plus a 2% cola for the next two years and \$645 for demolition plus the 2% Cola. Johnson bid was \$750. There is a surcharge when diesel goes above \$5 a gallon. Grendel and Johnson calculated it slightly differently. It is actually less. \$4.29 for every ten cents, about \$5 per gallon.

### **Cartwright**

He would have an additional charge as well.

### **Erb**

They both have an additional charge, and we do it by every ten cents. So, here's the issue. We have had problems for some time and particularly over this past summer with getting the solid waste hauled. At times we have had to shut down, particularly the demolition debris, because the containers were full and that's been an ongoing struggle with Aaron.

### **Elwell**

Haven't there been other problems.

### **Erb**

Cleanup is a problem. When waste is taken out of there, sometimes it is not left in a condition you would want. The way we write it in the specs is that they can assist on a limited basis but really, it is the hauler's responsibility to leave the place in good condition. As part of the bid specifications, we required them to have a backup hauling for those situations where at the contractor's expense, someone else will haul it if they cannot. We did receive the name of the backup for the Johnson bid. There was not one on Grendel's. I contacted him and he gave me a couple of names. When I contacted one, he said he really had not talked to him and gave no indication that he would. He said that he would work for the town but was not interested in being a backup. That was a guy named John Chadwick. The other one was Gordon Libby. Gordon did not call me back. I spoke to his wife. I asked Aaron what was up with these guys, and he said he figured he would be able to use them. He said his third backup Casella.

### **Elwell**

They would want to do the bid versus trying to do his work for him.



**Erb**

We did a lot of business with them in New York. From Ben's point of view, he would like to make a change.

**Elwell**

I have talked to Ben. I know over the years there have been problems with Grendel. His equipment is not that good. I would like to see a change also. I think we will do very well with Scott Johnson because per Tim Hoppe, Tim is actually going to be in with Scott Johnson.

**Erb**

Tim originally said he was going to bid as you probably know.

**Elwell**

He is going to be doing it with Scott. Tim bought a truck. They are going to do it. In talking with Tim and how he envisions it, it is going to work quite well.

**Conrad**

What is the timeframe of the contract, one year three years?

**Erb**

It is three years with the opportunity to leave after one year.

**Thompson**

Given the number of loads and so forth, what would be the impact of having it at \$750?

**Erb**

Around \$20,000 a year.

**Erb**

It cost us \$120,000 this past year. I put \$130,000 in the budget, but we are going to exceed that.

**Cartwright**

Part of the problem might be all the construction we have in our town over overloading the system. I see trucks there all the time with construction debris.

**Erb**

It does not get good compaction. We average around eight loads of household trash per month, and more than ten loads of demolition. It comes down to compaction.

**Cartwright**

At a certain level they do charge. I do not know how much the fees help.

**Erb**

It varies.

**Cartwright**

Did you say Johnson has a backup?

**Erb**

That is Tim Hoppe.

**Conrad**

The only question I have is whether we could be charging more for demo disposition.

**Carr**

We can but I do not think it'll make up a significant amount.

**Erb**

It is worth reviewing.

**Carr**

We are sure other construction projects are within the town. We have had issues with that. They were checking on where it was coming from and wanted an address.

**Erb**

Nothing has changed.

**Carr**

With gas prices, they really have to think about it, coming down the peninsula.

**Elwell**

That does not matter but I think it's time for a change because the problems I've been hearing over the years. To me \$20,000 is not worth the headache.

**Carr**

It is a cascading effect if our cans are full and it smells.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Conrad, to contract with Scott Johnston for the Municipal Solid Waste contract, and by a 5-0 vote, the motion carried.

## **Select Board Priorities for 2023-2024**

### **Conrad**

We might have a preview of coming attractions about the Comprehensive Plan and get input from the Select Board about their process.

### **Elwell**

Richard Bates would request the members to send him their ideas to discuss.

### **Thompson**

I am for that. Send me your ideas in the next week and that will give us time to put something together.

### **Elwell**

The Comprehensive Plan has a spot in there for the Select Board vision and what we should work on.

### **Thompson**

Aim for that as a major item in the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Cartwright, to adjourn the Select Board meeting, and by a 5-0 vote, the motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Taylor  
Recording Secretary  
Town of St. George, Maine