

**ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, February 27, 2017**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were: Richard Bates, Chairman, Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer and Tammy Willey. Also present were: Town Manager Tim Polky, Elizabeth Curtis, Scott Vaitones, David Percival, Susan Ellis, Peter Lubs, David Schmanska, Ben Vail, Jeff Boulet, Anne Matlack, Deb Armer, Ken Oelberger, Betsy Welch, Michael Felton, and Jeff Ward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to the Agenda: Selectperson Hall proposed the Policy Manual Discussion Items be moved to the end, only be addressed, if time permitted, as there are two meetings of budget items to review and discuss at this meeting. Chairman Bates proposed the Internet Broadband Committee give their presentation after the Board had gone over the committee reports.

- Minutes: The minutes of February 6, 2017 were amended as follows: (changes in red)
 Page 6, paragraph 4, line 4, under Letter from Michael Felton, change to read Town Manager Polky said the school **has agreements with five high schools**.
 Page 6, paragraph 4, line 5, change to read... attend any **of these**.
 Page 6, paragraph 6, line 6, add word. . . this **new** request was for the school. . .

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Selectperson Hall, it was voted 4-0, 1 abstention, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2017, as amended.

- Communications: None.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of February 27, 2017 was reviewed and signed by the Select Board. The total expenses were \$523,601.57. This expense included three weeks of invoices and a school payment of \$396,754.17.

Selectperson Willey asked Mr. Polky if the Town had considered getting a contract with Tim Hoppe. Selectperson Hall said he was going to ask about Mr. Hoppe when they got to the budget section, because there is \$4,400.00 in the warrant. Mr. Polky said the Board could discuss it under the budget section. Chairman Bates asked if the attorney's bills, under the Planning section, covered the legal fees, before Thursday. Polky said absolutely; that amount was all Molloy appeal(s), and it did not include Thursday's meeting. Chairman Bates said the attorney's fees of \$3,658.16, under Community Services, was for the Seaside Cemetery settlement, and it is complete.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Update on Energy Audit: The Town Manager met with Evergreen Performance Company earlier today. This group is proposing to do an energy audit for the Town. Mr. Polky thought he

would have a proposal from them by the end of the week. He took them through the Town Office building and to the Transfer Station. He said they are not getting into electricity use but mostly heat loss.

- Waste Management Update: Mr. Polky said he had received a proposal from Waste Management in Norridgewock. He said they were interested in extending the Town's existing contract for five years at the same price. Polky said currently, the Town pays \$57.69 a ton to dump it there. Their proposal would start next year at the same price. Thereafter, it would increase according to the Consumer Price Index, as it had for the last six years. He suggested the Board discuss and vote on this. Mr. Polky said the contract with Waste Management does have a 60-day notice clause should the Town decide it wanted to get out of the contract. He did not see Fiber Right or some of the other options being as good. Chairman Bates said the Fiber Right price had been in the range of \$80 a ton. Polky said Fiber Right was going into it with a smaller number of municipalities, so the price might be higher. Selectperson Willey asked Mr. Polky how much it would go up over the course of five years. Polky said the CPI had been under 2% so it would probably not be much more than 2% a year. Ms. Ellis asked if there was another company getting in on waste management business and offering attractive deals. Mr. Polky said there were two or three other companies. He agreed with Ellis that none were more attractive than Waste Management. Polky said the Town would be looking between \$80-\$100 a ton to go to Eco Maine. Ellis asked if there was only a 60-day notice required was there any penalty or pre-penalty if the Town wanted to get out of the contract. Polky said there was nothing in the contract for a penalty. Polky said Waste Management offered the Town the proposal. Chairman Bates asked Polky if he would like the Solid Waste Committee's recommendations. Mr. Polky said there was time to let the committee to look over this. They were scheduled to meet March 15th. Selectperson Willey and Mr. Polky thought the Solid Waste Committee had previously discussed these issues. Chairperson Bates and the Select Board agreed it would be good to ask the Solid Waste committee to make a recommendation. Selectperson Willey would discuss this with the committee.

- Committee Meetings:

Planning Board meets on Tuesday, February 28th, 7 p.m.
 Aqua Ventus, on Tuesday, February 28th 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
 Business Alliance, Tuesday, February 28th, afternoon
 Conservation Committee meets Thursday, March 2nd, 4 p.m.
 Harbor Committee meets Thursday, March 2nd, 6 p.m.
 Comprehensive Plan meets Thursday, March 2nd, 7 p.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Board of Appeals: Chairman Bates said the Board met on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed both Molloy appeals. Attorneys from all sides were present. Mr. Molloy's attorney made a subtle point which seemed to be unequivocal. While our ordinance says that something should not have an adverse impact on spawning grounds, fish, aquatic life, bird and other wildlife habitat, the Maine Supreme Court ruled that it would not just have an adverse impact but an unreasonable impact. The Maine Supreme Court said the criterion is not "any" adverse impact but an "unreasonable" impact. The Board of Appeals felt the decision by the Planning Board was incorrect and referred it back to the Planning Board, with a remand to issue the permit. Chairman Bates said last year, the Planning Board went through the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and adopted it and the town voted in May of 2016 to adopt that ordinance.

Molloy's attorney said the wording in the ordinance was incorrectly interpreted, and the Planning Board was wrong. Mr. Miller, the Chair of the Appeals Board said you may not like the law but that is the law. If you want to change it, there are mechanisms for changing it, i.e., a citizen's petition, or the Planning Board could revise/update the ordinance.

- Shellfish Committee: Selectperson Sawyer said the committee met on Tuesday. The Sheriff's Department was now doing law enforcement of the clam flats on the Georges River, and there have been more crimes committed on the clam flats. The committee was in favor of a bill before the Legislature which would allow communities to have harvest enclosures in conservation areas. Sawyer said if the Georges River Regional Shellfish Management Committee closed an area to shellfish harvesting, it would also be closed to wormers. This would give the clams a chance to re-populate and grow. The committee was hopeful that the bill would pass.

- Planning Board: Chairman Bates said the Board met on February 14th.

- There was an application for a wood processing shop and sign at 263 Port Clyde Road. The application was voted as complete, met the performance standards, and was approved.
- The application to repair a structure at 32 Allen's Way was tabled as the applicant was not present.
- The application for shoreline stabilization at 37 Haskell Point Road was tabled as the applicant was not present.
- There was an application to install an elevator at 181 Island Avenue and that was accepted as complete and approved.
- There were two applications for shoreline stabilization. One at 17 Neva Way and one at 9 Sea Street. Both were voted complete and approved, contingent on approval by the DEP and Army Corp of Engineers.
- The application to construct the Wyeth Reading Room at 20 Horse Point Road. It was reviewed. There was extensive discussion and an On-Site Public Hearing was scheduled for Saturday, March 4th at 9:00 a.m.

- Ad hoc Internet Service Availability Committee: The committee's final report was presented by Chairperson, Jeff Boulet. He said he moved here with his family and has been a St. George resident for two years. He runs a home-based, small technology company and commutes to Rockland.

The Committee's Charge: To investigate the quality of broadband in St. George, understand potential future broadband needs of the town, and to understand specifically how the town could improve the broadband, if needed.

Why is it important: It connects us to the world, important for students, educational purposes, connects aging populations with doctors and health networks and supports emergency services, connects local businesses to global market places and connects family and friends for email and social network news, entertainment, etc.

Committee Details: The quality of broadband varied throughout the town. The committee met with Connect ME, Time Warner Cable, Tillson Technology, and Axiom Technology. They prepared a town survey to get an idea what people had for internet speeds and they had 130 returned. The St. George School department, the library, and the Town buildings and many residents on Rt. 131 have great internet. Many residents on Rt. 131 have access to great broadband. The negative is many residents who live in coastal shore land areas, a lot of people in any new developments who live on dirt roads; they often do not have access to the internet. A

negative also is that we do not know who these people are because they cannot fill out an internet survey. Boulet said that over 10% of the surveys were returned.

The committee's recommendations were:

- The Town works with a technology company that can help assess its specific needs and get an estimate.
- Work with existing providers such as Time Warner Cable and Fairpoint to understand where there are gaps and see if they can help us fill some of those gaps. Boulet said maybe they have an obligation to fill some of those gaps.
- Since the Town has a contract with Time Warner Cable, see if they could get TWC to insure they are providing broadband at all the places where they are supposed to be providing it (all town owned properties).
- Organize coalitions of neighbors and neighborhoods to pay for broadband. Boulet said Time Warner's costs to run a wire for a mile is approximately \$20,000. It would be expensive for an individual but if you could bundle a group of residents, it might be considerably more affordable.
- When the Town grants a subdivision, it could require that it be wired to a minimum broadband standard. Boulet felt that would be a very proactive way of dealing with the issue of broadband.
- Continue to be supportive of educational outreach through the library.

In conclusion, Boulet said broadband is incredibly important, like electricity. People who do not have it but need it, are at a very serious disadvantage whether they are students or small business owners. There are residents in St. George who do not have broadband access and some who have very poor internet speeds which is sub-broadband. They are at a huge disadvantage because they cannot run a business; it is not an option to run a business out of their homes. There are many ways in which the town can improve broadband access for a modest investment with some wireless technology companies. A transmitter could go on Rt. 1, transmit to a tower somewhere on St. George and then the tower would distribute internet services. He said wireless technology can be upgraded so if technology changes, a new transmitter could be put in place. If So. Thomaston were using the transmitter, the towns could split the cost. The problem with wireless is it does not always reach everyone who lives in the shore land zone. It can go through trees but not mountains or hills.

Selectperson Hall asked what the recommended next step would be. Boulet said the committee's next step would be to do the planning study which involved calling the three main technology companies and have each do an assessment. (They charge a fee for doing the assessments.) The companies make their technology recommendations. Chairman Bates said the next step would be for the Select Board to see if these companies were interested in coming in. He said this is not a simple problem to fix.

The first step would be to have a contractor come and evaluate what needs to be done in the community, then use that information to get some grant funding for some of the aspects of building on the broadband infrastructure in the town. The other part would be working with contiguous municipalities whether Thomaston, South Thomaston and St. George.

Selectperson Hall said it was not clear to him, if this is included in the current budget proposal. Chairman Bates said he did not think it was included. Ms. Matlack said a contract

would cost about \$25,000. An RFP would be sent to the companies and ask what their cost would be. Matlack said maybe that would be a budget request for next year.

Ms. Ellis said there is a small percentage of people that do not have anything and there are a lot who are happy with their broadband. At this point, if the committee and project is to continue, they will need a budget. If they are to go forward, they will need money. Chairman Bates thanked the Ad Hoc Internet Committee for their time and hard work.

Overview of St. George 2017-2018 Budget Plan:

General Assistance:

- No changes are being made to this department.

Social and Community Services:

Health Equity Alliance, formerly known as the Downeast Aid's Network. They are requesting \$500; Public Health Agency serving most counties in the state, including Knox County. Provides free confidential AIDS and HCV testing, counseling, and other services. Offices located in Bangor, Ellsworth, Machias, Augusta. Ms. Curtis will look into this request further, so the Board can make a recommendation.

- **Neighbor to Neighbor:** Requesting \$3,000 but they requested \$0.00 last year. Mr. Percival said the program started 4 years ago and has provided about 600 rides to people in the community. He noted just in 2017, requests for rides had increased. People are utilizing the program for doctor's appointments, hospital trips, and food banks. The money would be for publicity, distributing pamphlets, creating a donor base and membership, and fund raising. The organization purchased a \$500 liability insurance plan this year, which they did not have before. Drivers have their own car insurance. Drivers are not allowed to accept payment or donations. The group applied to become a 501(3) C organization; no approval yet. The Waldo CAP used to provide some transportation to St. George residents and did not make a request this year (of \$1,300). Ellis and Percival said this would probably be a one time, increased request. This program is strictly for St. George residents and is stated so on the brochure.
- **Cemeteries:** A decrease in funding request. Selectperson Hall asked if there was a breakdown on the Veteran's Graves, by cemetery. Finance Director Curtis said it costs \$25 per grave (the Veteran's allowance). Mr. Hall said he and Mr. Falla had correspondence about the North Parish cemetery. The total requested amount was for \$8,500, the same as last year. Selectperson Hall will locate the correspondence. Mr. Polky confirmed that he did see the request for \$8,500. Chairman Bates said the Ridge Church had asked only for the veteran's allowance (\$2,145), no other funding requested in their letter. The town is taking care of the Seaside Cemetery. The amount in the line item was just for North Parish, and needed to be changed. Selectperson Hall will locate the correspondence for Curtis.
- **Jackson Memorial Library:** Requesting \$50,000 which is a \$15,000 increase from last year. Welch said they were starting their 5th year in the building. JML provides Pre-K and afterschool programs, which are not in the school's budget. The Pre-K program meets 3 days a week, 3 hours a day. There is one teacher and one aide. Superintendent Felton said he had heard from the kindergarten teachers that the Pre-K makes a huge difference with the children transitioning into K-1. JML provides organized projects

such as art, engineering, cooking, and other activities. School children utilize the library for personal enjoyment and to supplement classroom work. He said the afterschool program has grown and students in K-1 through 8 go there. The school partnered with JML through programs such as Leaps of Imagination, an art literacy program. Felton said for the school, the Library is another resource. It is close by and JML provided a lot of support to the students and faculty.

Deb Armer explained the other services JML provides. Adults go to utilize the internet service. She said it is a community center. There are groups and clubs there, such as poetry, activities such as bridge, games, technology support, and guest speakers. Artwork is on display. JML is increasing the large print books, audio books, improving the DVD selections. The increase request is due to loss of revenue stream. The Grace Institute \$5,000 endowment for the afterschool program was for five years. This is the last year. The Pre-K has been funded through a private foundation grant which is an advised gift and they do not know if they will be receiving it this year. The youth programs are about 30% of their budget. Most of the cost is the staff. They also provide the children with food after school. Chairman Bates said part of the increase is because the school students are using the library and the afterschool programs need to be supervised. There are costs associated with that. Lubs asked what the grant amount was and when would they know if JML would get it. Welch said it was about \$15,000 and they would not know until September 2017. Willey asked what the cost per Pre-K student was. Welch thought the program cost about \$20,000 but did not have the exact number. That included teacher's salaries. Lubs asked what the total library cost was and Armer said it was about \$200,000 for the coming year.

Wages and Benefits:

- There is a proposed 3% wage increase. Chairman Bates said the policy manual says the Town Manager's recommendations to the Select Board should be based on the cost of living adjustment which is the National CPIW, other factors such as exemplary performance, improved productivity or labor market realities. He said the CPIW from January 2016 to January 2017, it was 2.5%. Earlier in the year it was lower but the CPIW had picked up in the last few months. The increases had been averaging about 3% a year for the last 3 years. But it is at the town manager's discretion to make these increases. A motion was made by Sawyer, seconded by Elwell, to consider the Town Manager request of a 3% wage increase for all the staff. The vote was 4-1.

Harbors:

- Harbor Channel Maintenance had a \$500 increase. Schmanska explained this was for the channels and marked channels that have buoys. Some will need to be replaced. Most of the increase is for the launching and hauling of the buoys.
- Floats and Landings increased. Ellis asked if floats in Port Clyde would be replaced. He said there is a good possibility that the outside float in Port Clyde would be. The inside, year-round float in Port Clyde is going to be replaced.
- Ramps and Floats Reserve increased. Schmanska said it increased because they had to tap into that reserve account last year and may have to again this year.

- 10 Cold Storage Road has not yet been put in the budget. Schmanska said that they are still collecting facts and figures. Ellis asked when it would go into the budget. He could not answer the question because a lot depended on the Harbor Committee plan, which then would determine if they would get any grants, or bonds, etc.

Selectperson Hall said they have a year to date spending of \$191,000 in Harbors, if you look at January's expense statement. He asked Schmanska if they would be within the \$265,000 that is budgeted. Chairman Bates said part of it was due to the seasonal nature of the expenses. Selectperson Hall said there is a big piece of the budget which is the 10 Cold Storage Road property. There is a question about how much more expenditure is anticipated for rest of the fiscal year. He said he was looking ahead, trying to assess how we are doing and where we are going to end up. Curtis said they have every intention of being within the budget. She felt it was timing issues on what has been paid.

Mr. Hall said apart from next year, there was a hole in the budget. He felt there were two parts to this. There was a significant number yet to be filled in, and the question of whether the Town would be able to stay within the budget. Mr. Oelberger said to look at half the money that is spent so far, as the debt payment. Selectperson Hall looked over the debt payment which was \$98,683 year-to-date and thought it might need to be about \$1,000 more. Town Manager said the bond for the Town office building and transfer station went down every year because the interest decreased. Vaitones explained how municipal bonds worked. Curtis will get the current figures.

The Town Manager said there was discussion about having a special Town Meeting for 10 Cold Storage Road, if needed.

Parks and Recreation:

- Administration section for mowing showed a decrease. Ms. Ellis asked Ms. Curtis if it was a reduced line or the rest of the funds were under Public Works. Ms. Curtis said it was picked up by public works.
- Ballfield Maintenance. Selectperson Hall asked about the reduction. Vail said there had been several reductions because the projects (fence repair, added infield, site work done on ballfield) in last year's budget had been completed. The dugout is expected to be completed during the current budget. In Youth basketball, area communities banded together and did things differently, so it was cheaper for everyone.

Budget member Vaitones said that the school has a lot of and a good co-existence with Mr. Vail's program and they are at no cost to the town. The school provides the gym, lights, mowing and maintenance. Elwell added that Vail is doing a very good job with the students. Vail said the co-existence and cooperativeness goes both ways.

Unclassified:

- Family Health Contingent. There is a decrease to this account. Chairman Bates asked if the decrease was based on experience of the last year, as we had no idea who would be taking the Family Option from last year. And now we have a better idea? The Town

Manager said they do not know how much they will spend in this area. He said they requested the amount to make sure they would be able to cover expenses.

- Island Institute Fellow. The Select Board had voted to expend \$4,000 to match the school's Island Institute Fellow application.
- 38 Main St. Property. Elwell asked if money was being put aside should the roof need repairing. Mr. Polky said not really. He said this was supposed to a short term (3 years) property. The Town was looking at disposing of the property, so did not set up a reserve account. Chairman Bates said this could be an item the Board considers in the future, whether to try and sell the property at the end of this season or consider putting it on the market earlier.

Town Office:

- Advertising increased in anticipation of staff openings next year.
- Registrar of Voters increased slightly.
- Professional Services is currently where legal expenses have been budgeted. Curtis said that when they put the budget together, they had not made a decision whether that should be a planning professional expense. Mr. Polky said the Town had an appeal this year and had to hire a lawyer.
- Audit expenditure was due to the Town Manager retiring. The auditing company of Foster & Foster was hired to perform the audit.
- Property Maintenance decreased. Curtis said they were able to decrease the expense because they were creating a position. Polky said they had contracts for alarm maintenance, the elevator. Chairman Bates said that category included the furnace.
- Equipment Maintenance increased. This includes the photocopier, computers, etc.
- Sick Leave Reserve and Insurance Reserve is classified under Capital. Ms. Curtis said it is how they are handling the reserve funds, as the money is being deposited into the bank. It will be set in a saving account. When employees who have accrued sick time on the books leave, money will be paid out to them.
- Repave of Parking Lot is classified under Capital. Selectperson Hall asked if that was a Capital or an expense. There was discussion on this and Mr. Hall said there may be a reason why this was under Capital. Curtis reviewed this and said there was not. She said the salt shed roof was put under Capital in previous years. Mr. Polky and Curtis will get clarification on this and get back to the Boards.

At 9:00 p.m., a motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Hall to continue the meeting. The vote was 4-1.

- Employee Benefits is part of the assessing clerk's salary.
- Revaluation Reserve is a fund for the reassessment of property.

Planning:

- Board of Appeals members increased as the Town has had an appeal this year.
- Conservation Commission requesting a \$3,000 increase. Mr. Oelberger reported on the increases, decreases or unchanged items. The Education series is the same. Natural

resource mapping decreased. Conservation and Trail Maintenance Improvements increased due to expected work on trails. Alewife Restoration Project is continuing in partnership with the 8th grade school children.

Unclassified:

To establish energy efficiency reserve account for the purpose of an energy audit and energy upgrades on Town buildings. There was much discussion on the cost and paybacks of an audit. Chairperson Bates said Evergreen could do the audit. The Town Manager said this budget item should be placed under Unclassified. Chairman Bates asked for a motion. Elwell made a motion, Sawyer seconded, to appropriate \$25,000 to establish an energy efficiency reserve. The vote was 4-1. Willey asked for an amended amount of \$20,000. A motion was made by Hall, seconded by Elwell, to appropriate \$20,000 for the energy efficiency reserve. The vote was 5-0.

Fire Department:

- FD/EMA Office Staff increased by \$10,000 due to no longer having an Assistant Town Manager who did the paperwork and reporting. This position was created because of the changes the department had to make.
- Property Maintenance request decreased.
- Equipment Maintenance request decreased.
- Equipment Purchases increased. The Fire Department needs to replace 4 air packs @ \$6,000 each for the 10-year life and purchase one cutter rescue tool ("Jaws of Life") @ \$4,000. Mr. Polky said the Department did not qualify for a grant through the Federal program. He said the Department has 20 air packs in total but would like to replace four at a time.
- Personal Equipment increased. Mr. Polky said two years ago, the Department purchased 2 ½ sets a year. Now, they would like to buy four sets of turnout gear a year to keep up. They cost \$2,800 a set. He said turnout gear is anything the individuals would wear to go into a fire. The gear must meet the safety standards. In the past, gear could be reused. Now gear cannot be recycled to a new volunteer. It must be compliant, and it cannot be older than 10 years.
- Water Hole Reserve remains the same. The plan is to redo all the water holes. They get clogged with silt, and the water levels are down in some areas because the dams are gone. The last time the water holes had work done on them, was 10 years ago.

Animal Control:

- Funded at same level. There is a vacancy in this department.

Roads and Property Management:

- Property Manager position has been created. The budget shows a difference this year compared to past year as the Town wants to consolidate the expenses of various contracts into a new position. Ms. Curtis reviewed the funding and said the funding comes out of multiple departments.

- Equipment for the property manager. The Town already has a truck but will need a trailer and mowers. There is money in the winter account that could offset the purchase of these equipment items.
- Seaside Cemetery requested an increase for mowing, other maintenance and a Sexton position.
- Benefits for Property Manager are for health insurance. Ms. Curtis said this is a flat dollar amount no matter what the person's salary is.
- Contract Services are currently overspent by \$3,607.00. Mr. Polky said the reason was the paving of the roads. Mr. Polky said the Town was ahead of schedule on some of the contract services. One or two culverts need to have work done this year and some ditching work needs to be done. Mr. Polky felt comfortable with requesting the same amount as last year.

Solid Waste:

- Special Waste Fees increased. Mr. Polky explained that special waste is contaminated bilge water. It is used oil that has gas or antifreeze in it. There is a disposal fee for this item.
- Property Maintenance requests remains the same. Mr. Polky said that the compactor at the Transfer Station needs to be rebuilt. He would like to use the \$24,000 in reserve account to rebuild the compactor.
- Transportation. Mr. Polky explained the Transfer Station started charging fees for demo and brush which has limited the amount coming in. He said they just got a contract with Norridgewock. It is an exclusive contract; they want all the demo brush the Town has.
- SW Equipment Reserve. Mr. Polky said there was a replacement reserve for the tractor and other equipment on the list. He does not have hard figures on the purchase prices, so he would like to maintain the reserve account for that purpose.
- Transfer Station Attendants. Mr. Polky explained that not all the employees were full-time. There were part-time employees who did not have any benefits, and they had not been getting raises. Their hours were not increasing. Ellis asked why there appeared to be a 3% increase. He and Ms. Curtis would review this section and get back to the Boards.
- There was a discussion on the brush/wood line and with the uncertainty of the changing situation, we decided to keep the amount unchanged.

At 10:00 p.m., on a motion made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary

Reminders:

- Next Regular Select Board/Board of Assessors' Meeting, Monday, March 6, 2017, 6:00 p.m.
- Final Review of Budget and Present to Budget Committee, Monday, March 6, 2017

