

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2019 – 6 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. Members present were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present: Tim Polky, Elizabeth Curtis, and John Falla.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following items were added under New Business, Discussion Items.

David Schmanska's resignation letter.

An email inquiry from Josiah Wilson to discuss live streaming of Select Board meetings.

- Minutes: The Board of Assessor's minutes of December 17, 2018 was amended as follows: Page 2, line 3, change to read: Ms. Willey **asked if** he split something...

On a motion by Assessor Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Board of Assessors' minutes of December 17, 2018, as amended.

The Select Board minutes of December 17, 2019 were amended as follows:

Page 1, under heading, add the name **Select Board** before Meeting Minutes.

Page 1, under Town Manager's Report, line 1, change to read: ...due **to** personal... issues and **because** Terri Baines...

Page 2, under Shellfish Committee, line 1, change to read: ...he said **he** should...

Page 2, under Planning Board, line 3, change (Elmore) to (**Hart's Neck**)...

Page 3 corrections: Under Transfer from Reserve Fund, line 3 correct spelling to **break down**.

Line 8, change were to **was**.

Line 9, change to read: ...is to move **on** the excavator...

Paragraph 4, line 4, change to read: She **asked if the** town paid...

Page 4, 2nd full paragraph, line 4, change to read: ...because MCHT **would make** a \$9,000...

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Select Board minutes of December 17, 2019, as amended.

- Communications: The following communications were received.

A letter from David Schmanska stating his resignation, effective April 1, 2019.

A letter of response from Superintendent Mike Felton to Chair Bate's regarding Mr. Bates's question regarding "Raise the Floor" campaign. Chair Bates noted that a number of towns in Maine are trying to get more state funding for school districts. Chair Bates said Mike Felton thought the Select Board should be aware of the campaign, and he would be willing to talk

with the Select Board about this effort in more detail. Chair Bates said the State gives towns monies depending on the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding formula and there is an attempt by some towns to change the formula. Mr. Felton will contact Mark Robinson, Fayette Town Manager, who is leading this campaign and will get back to the Select Board after talking with him.

An email letter from Josiah Wilson, dated January 7, 2019. Mr. Wilson's questions and the Select Board responses:

- Why was the town property at 10 Cold Storage Road (10 CSR) used for logging trucks when clearing trees off Caldwell Island? Mr. Polky said this was not the first time they had used the 10 CSR, and the contractor pays a fee for using the property. Mr. Polky said this was no different than the Island Transporter or Art Tibbetts using the property.
- Why did the Harbor Committee not let the fishermen use bait trucks on 10 Cold Storage Road? Mr. Polky explained that at the time, the Harbor Committee was trying to come up with a model so some of the fishermen could use the facility. The committee had a plan for what they did not want to see at 10 CSR. They did not want to see garbage and other paraphernalia around. The Harbor Committee said yes they could use the facility but they could not use it for storage. They did not want to see any bait trucks or fuel trucks on the wharf.

Selectperson Hall thought the wording was "the stuff you brought down and took away, you needed to do in your own truck." Mr. Polky said yes, and it had to be done, daily. Selectperson Elwell said it was about the potential mess with no way to clean it up. Mr. Polky said that was why the committee went down that route; because the way they were going to allow people to use it, there would be no oversight or stewardship of the property.

Selectperson Willey asked what Wilson meant about bait trucks. Did he mean bait trucks setting down there so the fishermen could get bait off the trucks or just to back in there and deliver it and then onto the boat?

Selectperson Hall said a portion of the discussion that he recalled was – setting up the logistics of bait delivery on the wharf was going to be difficult and rather than establish a time to unload the truck, the theory was it would lead to bait getting deposited on the wharf for the fishermen to pick up at a later time. The second concern was about the traffic of bait trucks and having additional significant traffic such as that in a congested area. Selectperson Hall said there was a minimalist approach that was being offered to lobstermen: "you do your own stuff. The wharf is available for you to do your own stuff. Can't have a fuel truck down there, either." He said it was in a similar vein to what you take down there, you need to take away in your own truck. That was the early discussion and he thought it continued later.

Selectperson Elwell said there was no way to monitor trucks, fishermen, etc. It would be a nightmare more than it was going to be anything else.

- Wilson would like to discuss live streaming of Select Board meetings. This will be taken up under New Business.
- Was there a Select Board seat up in January 2019? Chair Bates said no, not in January but the elections are in May 2019.

Warrant: The warrant for the week of January 7, 2019 was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$169,110.76 and included three weeks payroll, two insurance payments to MMA for Worker's Compensation and Property & Casualty for \$17,336.60, a January winter roads payment of \$40,672 and scholarships paid out totaling \$3,000.

Selectperson Elwell asked whose responsibility was it to fill the holes in the road on Rt. 131. Was it MDOT or was there a clause in the J.K. Kalloch contract to fill the holes? Mr. Polky said the contract and payment was for winter maintenance. MDOT would fill the potholes.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Polky said Administration is working on the town budget. Mr. Polky told the Select Board they have not found an excavator yet but are still shopping around.

Mr. Polky said Steve Jarrett is back working on a limited basis.

Mr. Polky said Cayouette Flooring was down to look over the carpets in the main office building. He said Cayouette suggested not replacing those in the main office because they were good quality carpets. Cayouette felt the carpets just needed a good steam cleaning and they would last a few more years.

Mr. Polky said Cayouette also looked at the carpet in the downstairs Select Board meeting room and recommended the carpet be replaced. Polky said the carpets are emitting an odor and the plan is to replace the downstairs carpet out of the FY2018 budget. He thought there was enough money in the budget to do that. Cayouette will get estimates for Mr. Polky.

Mr. Polky said he preferred carpet to tile flooring as carpeting was not as slippery and room acoustics seemed better. Mr. Polky said the downstairs carpet had been replaced in the past due to a flood. He noted that the downstairs carpet was not "top of the line."

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported the following. She said the CC met on Thursday, January 3, 2019 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. She said they are very good about ending their meetings on time. She said they are continuing their work on invasive plants. The CC created a list of twelve invasive plants which they felt they could work on. The CC will be focusing on that list and they will be working with St. George students and Ms. England. The CC would like to make the community aware of invasive plants and what people can do to plants that are natural to the state of Maine and the town.

Selectperson Willey said the CC had a small group of people that met at Meadow Brook Preserve to begin work on plans for a parking area, a future foot path, and a kiosk. She said after all the plans have been made and approved, St. George School students and Ms. England would be helping with this project.

An educational program has been scheduled for Thursday, January 24 at 7 p.m. Guest speaker is Kirk Gentlen who will do a presentation and talk about the wildlife in St. George. The CC asks that if it snows, to check the town website for a possible cancellation.

Commission members are working on their Action Plan, their budget and information for the newsletter. The CC asked Ms. Willey who the contact person was for the town website and that a number of members stated they did not like the new website. She said they indicated it was hard to navigate, to get into the calendar, and wished it had never changed. Ms. Willey said she had also heard those complaints from a lot of people in town.

Mr. Polky said that for now, Tara Elwell was the contact person for the website but that would be changing. He said the intent is to have the Office Manager, Terri-Lynn Baines, eventually work on the website.

The Select Board discussed complaints surrounding the website calendar. The Board was not sure what problems people were experiencing and recommended that if people had questions, to come into the office and staff could help them. Mr. Polky said the website was different but felt it was more navigable and people would eventually get used to using it.

Chair Bates said in the CC minutes they were talking about carryovers and he was not sure the Select Board had discussed this since there are accounting rules about what can be carried over. Ms. Curtis said Mr. Oelberger came to see her. She noted that where the money (\$3,850) was for a specific project, the carryover would probably be okay, if the specific project was for Meadow Brook.

- Budget Committee: Selectperson Hall said the Budget Committee would be meeting on Wednesday, January 9th at 6:30 p.m. and the topic would be CPI Guideline for the Salary Increases.

- Shellfish Committee: Selectperson Sawyer said the Shellfish Committee would be meeting on Thursday, January 10. Mr. Sawyer said he would be unable to attend that meeting due to another obligation.

- Harbor Committee: Selectperson Elwell said the Harbor Committee would meet on Tuesday, January 8th at 6 p.m.

- Boards, Committees and Commissions Website Notes: Chair Bates reminded the Select Board as part of improving town communications, the Boards, Committees and Commissions would write short monthly updates (a few sentences) about what they had done in the last month to be posted on the website. Chair Bates said to send him the notes by Monday, January 28th and he would get them ready for posting, as Ms. Baines was working on the Town Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 10 Cold Storage Road Renovations: Mr. Polky said the Harbor Committee is scheduled to meet with Noel Musson and Greg Johnston. The committee plans to have everything all set for Tuesday night and submit a preapplication to the Planning Board. Mr. Polky said the Harbor Committee would be meeting at 6 p.m. to review the plan and meet with the Planning Board at 7 p.m. Dan Morris said whether Mr. Musson could attend or not (due to a possible storm), the committee would still meet and Mr. Musson could call in.

Selectperson Hall asked if the meeting minutes were all caught up or if an update was available. Mr. Polky said the website had not yet been updated but all the minutes were now done and would be distributed soon.

- Update on Solar Panels: Ms. Curtis said CMP still billed the town incorrectly and had not gotten a response from the voice mail she left them last week. She said she would have time this week to start going beyond the contacts she had been given. For now, she said she would

continue to work on this issue by phone and email. Ms. Curtis said ReVision thanked her for sending them all the bills. Ms. Curtis said ReVision's legal department was going to file a complaint with the PUC as there were other towns experiencing the same problem.

Selectperson Willey asked how the system was working as she had heard that a switch was not working. Mr. Polky said as far as he knew, the system was working correctly. There had been issues over the later part of the summer; but at present he was not aware of anything and had not noticed any difference on the website as far as how much energy was being produced. Ms. Willey said she will check with the individuals again and if they think there is a problem, she will have them call the town office.

- Update on Audit RFP: Ms. Curtis said the town has two proposals to review. She said originally there were seven firms who said they were interested. Two firms contacted her and said they were not going to submit a proposal; two proposals were received by the deadline of January 4th and three firms did not respond. Foster and Company, LLP did not submit a proposal but is willing to talk with the town if an audit firm is not found. She said they were not comfortable locking into a fixed price at this time.

Ms. Curtis said the audit committee is reviewing the proposals this week and then they will decide if they want to interview one or both of them. She said the committee hoped to have a final decision by January 21st to present to the Boards. Ms. Curtis would like to present the final proposal to the Select Board on January 28, 2019.

- Assessing 101 for Assessors: John Falla held a 50-minute educational workshop on basic assessing. The handout included: What is available on-line at the State of Maine website. What is available on-line at Maine Municipal Association and MMA Assessment Manual, Chapter 1- the Creation, Qualification and Liability of Assessors and Assessment and Chapter 2 - the General Requirements and Process.

Mr. Falla explained the difference between an assessing agent and an assessing clerk. He said Bob Gingras was currently the town's assessing agent and is certified by the State of Maine.

Mr. Falla stressed the importance of property owners examining their property card(s). Mr. Falla said the general public should be told to come in to the town office and look at their property cards. He said the card contains a great deal of information such as, how old the house is, how many structures are on the property, a drawing of the structure(s), if there are any decks, how many bedrooms, how many rooms in the house, bathrooms, what type of basement it has, whether it is wet or dry, etc. He thought property owners should make a copy of the card, take it home, look it over and make sure everything is accurate.

Mr. Falla also reviewed the term "just value" and stressed the importance to the Board of Assessors to value all property fairly and that everyone is being treated fairly. He noted that the pricing schedules are based upon sales. It is not the value of the property.

Mr. Falla also reviewed how different types of town trends affect property valuations. He suggested that the Select Board consider meeting with an assessor's agent more frequently to review trends, sales, and whether there are other areas the Board should be looking at.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Add Office Manager to Town Bank Accounts: Ms. Curtis said the bank needed documentation of the Select Board minutes which discussed adding Terri-Lynn Baines to the town's bank accounts and the result of the vote.

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve adding Terri-Lynn Baines to the First National bank accounts.

Ms. Curtis said she would like to add Ms. Baines to the account as soon as possible because Ms. Curtis is cutting the checks, signing the checks, reconciling bank accounts, etc. Ms. Curtis submitted a letter to the Select Board asking their permission for the process to start this week. Ms. Curtis said she would then provide the bank with a copy of the minutes next week. Town Manager Polky will sign the bank cards to have Cherie Yattaw's name removed and to add Terri-Lynn Baines.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to have Chair Bates sign the letter to the bank, verifying the Select Board voted on January 7, 2019, to add Terri-Lynn Baines on the First National bank accounts.

- Transfer from Reserve Fund: Mr. Polky said the town needed to build a couple of floats for Tenants Harbor. He said the two floats that were removed were more than 20 years old and could not go back in the water. Ms. Willey asked if the floats would be the same size and Mr. Polky said yes. He said there is money in the reserve accounts but the Select Board has to approve the transfer and expenditure of the funds. He said money had been earmarked for this.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to take money from the reserve fund plus the allocation for this current year to pay for two new floats for Tenants Harbor.

Selectperson Hall said there had been discussion in the past about the amount of reserves that would be required at 10 Cold Storage Road and he thought it would be good for the Select Board to look at the town's history on these. Mr. Polky and Chair Bates agreed this would be a good topic for a later discussion.

- FY'20 Budget Input from Select Board & Budget Committee to the Town Manager on General Areas:

- Selectperson Elwell suggested possible parking at the Juniper Street property. Mr. Polky said it was not set up well for parking. Selectperson Hall thought it would take a lot of money to set up a parking area because of there is an old septic system on the property. Selectperson Hall felt the town should not spend any serious money there on making it available for parking without some consideration of its longer-term use. Mr. Polky thought the town would have to look at this property in the future.
- Mr. Polky suggested the Select Board also think about long term uses for the old library before putting too much money into the building. Ms. Curtis noted that money for the old library roof had been earmarked in this year's budget.
- Chair Bates suggested purchasing software that would help maintain institutional knowledge and keep track of work tasks, as long-term town employees leave or retire. He also suggested using a spreadsheet to document the work tasks. Chair Bates said Dave Schmanska would have to document his work duties before April 1st. Ms. Curtis

said Dave is doing a good job telling the staff of his duties and passing along the information.

Ms. Curtis felt the office was in pretty good shape, given all the changes that have taken place in over the last two years. Ms. Curtis said when Peggy Black retired, the staff realized how much knowledge walked out the door, so the staff started documenting better. She said Office Manager Terri-Lynn has been asking lots of great questions and taking notes. Chair Bates felt it was really important that the capture of institutional knowledge was formalized. Ms. Curtis felt if a person left now, the transition would be much smoother. Mr. Polky said they had to get to that point where everybody in the office has a backup. He said they were not at that spot but were better. Mr. Polky noted that the documented notes/lists need to be put somewhere and thought they might have the ability to store them on the town server. Mr. Polky said the town owns the server and before John Falla left, he put a lot of information on the server.

- Discussion on Live Stream Broadcast of Select Board Meetings: An email was received from Josiah Wilson asking the Select Board to discuss live stream broadcasting of Select Board meetings.

Selectperson Sawyer felt the meetings were done properly, maybe not decorously but he felt the Board operated well that way. He said occasionally an issue of a more personal nature arises and a member of the board is able to resolve it.

Selectperson Hall felt live streaming could be a stifling factor in discussions and would impact the efficient operation of the Select Board.

Selectperson Elwell said the Select Board is transparent. The public can read the minutes or come to a meeting. He felt the Select Board is able to work through issues in its current setting.

Selectperson Willey was not in favor of live streaming the meetings.

Chair Bates felt it is much better for the public to come to the meeting and engage with the Select Board. He thought it would have an inhibiting affect if there was no public here but they were on television. He also felt that in defense of what they are doing now, the minutes are quite comprehensive.

Select Board members noted that the meetings are open to the public, the board minutes are extensively written and get posted to the town website. Board members felt these were adequate solutions for the town of St. George.

At 8:02 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary