

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2019 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Members present were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present: Tim Polky, Scott Vaitones, Crystal Tarjick, Earl Ludman, Susy Ellis and Dave Percival.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Earl Ludman said the town newsletter listed the Select Board's meeting start time as 6 p.m. and asked if the time could be corrected to 7 p.m. Chair Bates said he would talk with office staff to get the correction done.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustment was made:

Finalize Review of Budget and Present to Budget Committee was moved from New Business and taken up first under Regular Session

- Select Board Recommendations on the St. George 2019-2020 Proposed Budget Plan and Presentation to the Budget Committee:

Mr. Ludman sent an email to the Select Board with his comments regarding the salary increase. Chair Bates summarized some of the points in Mr. Ludman's email:

- Salary increases to town employees is highly political. The Select Board and Town Manager will have to defend their recommendation on what may be a heated discussion at town meeting.
- Personnel policy talks about the raises being based on the increase in the CPI. Chair Bates noted the Budget Committee recently worked with the Select Board to rewrite policy in this area.
- The issue of merit increases. The town's salaries get "out of whack" with those of comparable towns. Ludman said, "Which is possible if salary increases are compounded from one year to another and they are in excess of the CPI. In other words, there is a cumulative effect as in the case of compound interest."

Earl Ludman's letter offered a few suggestions on how this could be handled. For example, giving employees bonuses rather than annual increases and merit increases should be given in what is really above average performance.

Chair Bates said he realized the Select Board had access to the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) salary surveys and the Budget Committee did not. Chair Bates said every year all towns in the state are encouraged to submit their data to the MMA. With an account, you can review all the salary survey information, pull out data on all the different positions the towns have put data in, and other very interesting information about benefits. For example, you can see how benefits compare to other towns.

Chair Bates suggested the Select Board make sure Budget Committee members, who want access to the MMA salary survey, has an account set up for next year. Chair Bates felt the website was very informative. For example, it could compare St. George to other

towns of comparable size and residents. Chair Bates felt having access to this information would be helpful to the Budget Committee.

- Performance Reviews. Chair Bates said it has been the practice of the Town Manager to do a yearly employee performance review. He said the Town Manager and employee discuss what they are good at, what they are not so good at, and then the Town Manager and the supervisor put forward a plan for training, if needed. Mr. Ludman asked if that happened this year? Chair Bates said yes, this is part of the performance review. Mr. Ludman said he did not think the Budget Committee knew that happened. Ms. Ellis asked, "Are there formal performance reviews?" Ms. Ellis noted it was good to be able to speak to the employee and it was good for the employee to be able to speak to the Town Manager.

Mr. Polky explained the process for performance evaluations: The Department Supervisor and the Town Manager meets with each individual for a work performance review. Mr. Polky said the review spells out deficiencies and makes suggestions for improvements. A copy of the performance evaluation is placed in the employee's record and remains in their file throughout their work history with the town. The performance evaluation is done every year directly after town meeting and just before the start of the new fiscal year.

Chair Bates stated salary increases are given at the discretion of the Town Manager. Salary increases are not given automatically. Ms. Ellis said, "It was our understanding that frequently it was distributed quite evenly, but was that not the case?" Chair Bates said he could think of situations in past years where not everyone had gotten the same raise. Mr. Polky said often times it is equal but there are times when it is not. Ms. Ellis said mostly yes, but sometimes no.

Chair Bates agreed with Ludman that salary issues can get complicated but felt the town was extraordinarily fortunate to have quality staff who have been able to keep the continuity of work going in spite of all the staff changes the last couple of years.

Mr. Ludman suggested the term merit increase may not always be appropriate for what an employer was trying to do. That it may actually be a salary compression and he gave examples of each. Selectperson Hall thought, with new employees where there is often increased productivity and rapid growth in the job, true merit increases are warranted.

Mr. Polky said he wanted the Budget Committee to understand that Administration does a review and pays according to how well the employee is doing their job. He said, if there is productivity, the employee receives a merit increase. If they are not progressing, they do not get a merit increase. Mr. Polky said they are shown what their problem areas were last year and if they have not improved, they do not receive a merit increase. Mr. Polky said there have been times when a new employee started at a higher salary level than the previous employee, and there have been times when a new employee started at a lower salary level. Mr. Polky said it depends on what that employee brings to the job. Ms. Ellis asked, "When you say we don't give them a bump if they have issues to work on, would that mean they did not get the COLA raise, either? Or does everyone get the COLA?" Mr. Polky said we try to give everyone the COLA.

Select Board Recommended Budget for FY'2019-2020:

- Town Office: Chair Bates stated the summer intern position was deleted. The audit amount decreased. Professional Services decreased. The roofing for the town office increased.

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 4-1 to approve the Town Office budget of \$646,938.93.

- Select Board/Assessors: On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Select Board/Assessors budget of \$66,392.86.

- Planning Department: On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-1 to approve the Planning Department budget of \$104,602.01.

- Public Safety – Fire Department: On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-1 (Elwell abstained) to approve the Public Safety – Fire Department budget of \$414,951.00.

- Public Safety – Animal Control: On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Public Safety budget of \$9,409.00.

- Public Works – Roads & Property Management: On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-1 to approve the Public Works budget of \$661,468.57.00.

- Public Works – Solid Waste: On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-1 to approve the Public Works – Solid Waste budget of \$522,540.11.

- General Assistance: On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the General Assistance budget of \$2,500.00

- Social & Community Services: Cemeteries increased to \$6,500. CDC decreased to \$5,000. Ms. Willey asked if there was further information from the CDC about the use of the \$5,000. Mr. Hall said it would not be used for their basic operating expenses. It was for programs. Health Equity Alliance was removed from the budget request.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Social & Community Services budget of \$206,995.00.

- Parks & Recreation: On a motion by Selectperson Willey, seconded by Hall, it was voted 4-1 to approve the Parks & Recreation budget of \$107,110.49.

- Harbors: Selectperson Willey asked about this budget item. Will there be a change in salary for the new Harbormaster? Mr. Polky said yes and the money allocated is sufficient. Ms. Willey asked if the allocated amount would be more, and Polky said not at this time.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Harbors budget of \$406,182.50.

- Unclassified: Selectperson Hall asked about the Family Health Contingent account. Is this budgeted to cover the potential increase in benefits if some employees opt to take some of the family options? Polky said not everyone is taking Family Health Insurance. There are some

people who maybe retiring that are not on Family Health Insurance. But the new hires may need to go on this, so they want to have the contingent amount available.

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Unclassified budget of \$115,141.00.

Summary of Additional Warrant Articles for 2019-2020 Town Report:

- To see if the Town will vote to charge interest on all delinquent taxes at the rate of 9.00% annum, computed on a daily basis, and to establish two due dates for property taxes, with one-half of the tax amount due September 30, 2019 and one-half of the tax amount due March 31, 2020.

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve this Article in the town warrant.

- To see if the Town will vote to authorize the acceptance of prepayment of taxes not yet committed and pay no interest thereon, and to pay interest on all overpaid taxes at a rate of 5.00% per annum, computed on a daily basis, from the date of the overpayment. Any overpayment of taxes from one year applied to the next year at the request of the taxpayer will be treated as prepayment of taxes not yet committed.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve this Article of the town warrant.

- To see what sum the Town will vote to appropriate from overlay to pay for tax abatements and any interest due thereon.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to approve this Article of the town warrant.

- To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$125,000 from Fund Balance to be used to reduce the total commitment for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve this Article of the town warrant.

- To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to transfer funds up to \$50,000 within the appropriations approved for 2019-2020 in order to cover line item overdrafts.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to approve this Article of the town warrant.

- Discussion regarding St. George FY'20 Budget Variance Analysis:

The Select Board and Budget Committee discussed the issue of including a variance analysis in the town warrant. Chair Bates suggested the analysis be included directly before the warrant articles. Selectperson Hall and Mr. Ludman will meet with Terri-Lynn Baines to develop a "Summary of the Proposed Spending" for the town report.

- Minutes: The minutes of February 25, 2019 were amended as follows:

Page 2, under Other Questions, dash #5, line 1, correct word to over**head**

Page 3, dash #11, change to read: ...ask them **for a report** next year.

Page 3, under Public Safety, bullet 3, line 2, correct word to hole

Page 3, under Discussion re. St. George FY'20 Budget, paragraph 2, line 8, delete word **to**; change to read: Polky also suggested, starting with...

Page 3, under Discussion re. St. George FY'20 Budget, paragraph 2, line 9, insert word **to**; change to read: ...next year's budget, **to** use a footnote...

Page 4, bullet 2 changes, line 2, correct COLA to **2.6%**; and
delete the last sentence in its entirety.

Page 4, bullet 3 changes, line 2, change to read: **...last year**; line 3, change to read: **...match of up to 4%...**; correct to employees; lines 8, delete word **directionally**; line 9 and 10, change to read: **said new hires (employees) are offered the "up to 4% matching option."**

Page 6, line 2, change to read: **...the cost of disposal has gone down.**

Page 2 changes, Under Audit, paragraph 2, line 1, add s to word expenditures;

line 3 change to read: **... a pretty good job budgeting as it came close to the** budget with a little bit to the plus.

Page 7 changes, line 8, change to read: **town, like... currently** being done.

line 10, delete duplicate wording: **could not mean there**

paragraph 2, line 3, delete comma after word **discussion**

Page 9 changes, under Update on Solar Panels, line 4, change to: **He** questioned...

line 6, change to read: **... is a question on the net energy billing the billing agreement.** "Can we change it so **that the surplus** rolls over instead of **being** allocated by percentages, ...

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Select Board minutes of February 25, 2019, as amended.

- Communications: The following communications were received.

Chair Bates received a note from Joss Coggeshall. Mr. Coggeshall explained that his house has a great view of the harbor in Port Clyde, can often spot situations or issues that arise in the harbor, and is very willing to help the town out.

Chair Bates received correspondence from Representative Ann Matlack who hoped she would be attending the Select Board meeting on April 1, 2019. Chair Bates spoke with Senator Miramant who was not sure if he could attend the meeting.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of February 25, 2019 was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$499,849.18 and includes a March school payment of \$413,092.67 and a payment to Harris Computer Services for the TRIO software license of \$9,123.00.

Chair Bates asked about the payments to Simpson Electric. Mr. Polky said Simpson had to rebuild one of the bathroom fans at the town office.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Polky said a they hired Matt McCollom as Harbormaster. Polky said it is a requirement for a Harbormaster to be certified, so McCollom is attending training at Castine this week.

Magan Wallace was hired as Administrative Assistant and will start work on Monday, March 18, 2019.

Mr. Polky reported on the Barter's Point Road fire which occurred on Friday, March 8th. The house and garage are a total loss. He noted two firemen were injured. One slipped on the ice going in and another fireman on his way out had a tree branch injure his eye. Selectperson Elwell said the Junior Division of the St. George Fire Department has a good group of young people and a good program for the junior division. Mr. Polky said three employees from the Fire

Marshall's office were down at the fire. Two of the employees complimented the St. George Fire Department on how well they worked together with the other fire departments from surrounding towns, and how well the St. George Fire Department worked.

Mr. Polky said the recent fire brings up the point that a lot of private roads in town are not built to take fire trucks.

Mr. Polky reported there were a number of properties on the town's tax acquired property list which he will be reviewing and acting on in the near future.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey was unable to attend the CC meeting.

- Budget Committee: Selectperson Hall said the Budget Committee met on March 7th to discuss the FY'2019-2020 proposed budget. The committee attended the meeting earlier this evening and had more questions for the Town Manager and Select Board regarding the budget.

- Harbor Committee: Selectperson Elwell said the Harbor Committee held a Public Hearing on 10 Cold Storage Road on March 6, 2019. Chair Bates said Noel Musson did a really good job with the presentation. For example, he showed how an 18-wheeler tractor trailer would be able to maneuver a three-point turn on the commercial side of the property.

- Cemetery Committee: Selectperson Hall said the committee has not met but had sent a draft ordinance to the legal counsel of Bernstein, Shur approximately two months ago. The committee is still waiting to hear back from them.

- Solid Waste and Recycling Committee: Selectperson Willey said the SW& RC would be starting their meetings up again soon. She had received an email from Wendy Carr about the possibility of holding a shredding event this year. Carr thought there was still money in their current budget to cover an event but she was not sure. Mr. Polky said there is money in that fund; but the last shredding event cost the town \$630, it only took in \$135, and few people participated, so did the town want to do the event again? Selectperson Elwell asked what it would cost the town to buy a shredder at put it at the transfer station. Mr. Polky said he had suggested that, but the SW&RC was concerned about security issues. Mr. Polky thought the town could buy a very good shredder for \$600. Chair Bates said if the SW&RC wants to hold a shredding event, they will bring a proposal to the Select Board.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates said the Planning Board met on February 26, 2019 at 7 p.m. The building permit application to build a bait freezer at 13 Rein Road was considered and a site visit scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on March 11.

The application by American Tower at 74 Walston Road, to replace antennas and associated outdoor equipment (for T-Mobile) was accepted as complete and, meeting the performance standards of the Site Plan Review ordinance, it was approved.

After a legal review of the draft Sign Ordinance and learning about the implications of a 2015 Supreme Court ruling on sign regulations, the Board decided to make some amendments before passing it on to the MMA for their comments and review.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Quitclaim Deeds: Town Manager Polky presented two Quitclaim deeds to the Select Board. One deed for Vanessa B. Boynton and one for Erla T. Rein as their property taxes have been paid. These were reviewed and signed by the Select Board.

- Appointment of Terri-Lynn Baines as Tax Collector: On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the appointment of Terri-Lynn Baines as Tax Collector. The Certificate of Appointment was signed by the Select Board.

- Abatement: There was one abatement request. Whitney Hupper felt he was being overcharged on property taxes for a well and a septic system which he said he did not have. Bob Gingras assessed Mr. Hupper's property and verified he did not have a well and septic system. This resulted in an abatement of \$53.70.

On a motion by Selectperson Willey, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to accept the recommendation of Mr. Gingras and approve an abatement in the amount of \$53.70.

- Liquor License: Mr. Polky said the East Wind Inn has had their liquor license for more than five years and Mr. Deutsch had requested the public hearing be waived.

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the liquor license application for Randy Deutsch, d/b/a East Wind Inn.

- Veteran's Property Tax Exemption: Town Manager Polky reported that Kelly Mahoney applied for a Post W.W.I. property tax exemption in the amount of \$6,000. The Select Board reviewed his application and his veteran's status.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Veteran's Property Tax Exemption for Kelly Mahoney. Chair Bates signed the Certification of Approval of Applicant's Exempt status.

- Renewal of Septic Waste Disposal Facility Agreement with Interstate Septic: The Town Manager said the town is required by the state to have a disposal site for its solid waste. If the town does not have one, it must have a contract for disposal. Mr. Polky noted that the town has contracted with Interstate Septic for 20 years and the rate has remained the same.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to approve the contract with Interstate Septic Systems.

- Moderator for the Annual Town Meeting: By consensus, the Select Board agreed to invite Michael Mayo to the annual town meeting in May. Town Manager Polky will contact Michael Mayo.

At 9 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary

