

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

August 5, 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, Terri-Lynn Baines, Nancy Field Frederick, Carolyn Garratt-Reed, Dale Pierson, John M. Falla, David Percival, Scott Vaitones, Brian Higley, Tara Elwell, Crystal Tarjick, Susy Ellis, Richard Cohen, Elizabeth May, Stephanie Smith, Suzanne Luzius, and James Skoglund.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- FY'19 Year End Financial Review was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- Historical Society Proposal was moved from Old Business to Regular Session
- Town Office Vacation Time was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- Revised Municipal Tax Rate Calculation Standard Forms was added under New Business

- FY'19 Year End Financial Review: Susy Ellis, Chair of the Budget Committee, led the discussion on the fourth quarter, year-end review.

Town Office:

Software License. The budget is over because of a one-time fee that was not been included in the budget. This was for the SQL upgrade.

Office Expense. The budget is over. Ms. Baines will send Ms. Ellis a breakdown of expenses.

Insurance. The unexpended balance is low. The Budget Committee asked why. Mr. Polky said the insurance is based on the town's experience and the town has not filed any claims the last couple of years.

Professional Services. Expenditures are less because the town has had less legal bills this year.

Property Maintenance. There is a balance. This line item carried forward and will lapse to fund balance.

Select Board/Assessors:

Software License. Expenditures in this area are less. The software package license for the Town Office is different than the software license for the Assessors. Ms. Baines noted the Assessors have a separate module in the TRIO program. TRIO software is expensive and there are limited software programs available on the market.

Planning:

Board of Appeals. There were no expenditures for this item as the committee did not meet.

Conservation Commission. The majority of funds have been carried forward. Mr. Polky said funds that are earmarked for specific projects can be carried forward, and most of the CC's projects are such.

Fire Department:

Fire Department/EMD Staff. There is a balance for this line item as the town did not use many services this year. The funds for air packs and safety equipment have been rolled forward and will be purchased this fiscal year.

Burn Building. Ms. Ellis asked, "Where is the money that was raised for the burn building?" Mr. Polky said the money is in the Fireman's Association's bank account. The money has been combined with a loan from USDA (\$350,000). The Fire Department's (FD) budget for the burn building was \$500,000. The closest bid came in at \$900,000 plus, so the FD redesigned the building and lessened the cost by using different types of materials. The plan is to have the bid ready by the end of August.

Fire Department Equipment Purchase, the Fire Department Personal Equipment, and the Fire Department Back Stairs. The funds have been carried forward.

Roads & Property Management:

Contract Services. This item is overbudget and Ms. Ellis asked why. Mr. Polky stated most of the expenditure was preparing for paving roads. He also said the town received bills pertaining to a storm approximately two years ago in which the town incurred large expenses. The town just received bills from the contractors, J.K.Kalloch and Tim Hoppe Tree Services. Mr. Polky said funding for these storms had been received from the Federal government and the Maine state government.

Cemetery Mowing. There is a balance in this line item. Due to inclement weather, little mowing was done.

Cemetery Maintenance. This line item is overbudget. Mr. Polky thought this item may need to be re-addressed, but a lot of maintenance was done at the Seaside Cemetery. Ms. Baines said she would review this item for Ms. Ellis and get back to her.

Resurfacing. There is a balance. This line item carried forward and will lapse to fund balance.

Winter Roads. This item is overbudget, but the town receives revenue from the State for plowing and sanding Rt. 131.

Solid Waste & Recycling:

Transportation. This line item is overbudget.

Recycling. There is a balance in this line item. Mr. Polky stated this line is the Recycling Committee's budget. A lot of their budget is used for buying recycling bins, composters, etc., and these need to be re-ordered as they are out of stock at the transfer station.

Social and Community Services:

Veteran's Graves. This item is overbudget by \$255.26 but has been reimbursed.

Generator. This item is over budget by \$4,778.80.

Recreation:

Recreational Ballfield Maintenance. Ms. Tarjick asked what the difference is between the Ballfield Maintenance and Property Maintenance. Mr. Polky said the ballfield maintenance is specific to the ballfield.

Property Maintenance. Mr. Polky noted that \$37.50 was spent for property maintenance. Ms. Ellis and Tarjick asked if the town even needed to budget for property maintenance. Mr. Polky

said yes because the town has a couple of other buildings which are shared with the Rec Department, the Harbor Committee, and the Public Works. The line item does not carry forward and will lapse to fund balance.

Ms. Ellis asked which projects have been completed and which projects will be done. The Budget Committee did receive a detailed list of projects at budget time, but Polky said the best person to ask is Ben Vail. Ms. Ellis said she will contact Mr. Vail and forward that information to the Select Board.

Harbors:

Debt Payment. This item was overbudget but was covered by Cold Storage revenue (the interest).

Renovations - 10 CSR. The repairs that were required to 10 CSR for the storm damage did not fall under the Renovations 10 CSR line. This line did not carry forward and Mr. Hall asked why. Mr. Polky did not know but said line 9653 (Reno 10CSR) had been discontinued.

Design & Planning - 10 CSR. The unexpended balance has been carried forward to fund balance.

Mr. Hall said both Renovations and Design & Planning were approved for work that was to be done and is to be done, and he thought that both line items should be carried forward. Mr. Polky said he would look into it and get back to the Select Board.

Unclassified:

Island Institute Fellow. The Island Fellow left the position prior to this budget year.

Revenues:

Town Office – Miscellaneous. There is a balance of \$22,083.31 under miscellaneous. Ms. Baines said she will let Ms. Ellis know what is in the miscellaneous account.

State Reimbursement, Homestead. Ms. Ellis asked why the reimbursement amount was significantly less than the town anticipated. Chair Bates said the Homestead Reimbursement would be discussed later in the meeting as an error was recognized by the state auditor; but the town did receive the correct amount which was \$98,064.00.

There were no further questions on the Year End Budget.

Mr. Vaitones reported that Susy Ellis was re-elected as Chair of the Budget Committee.

- Historical Society Proposal: At the last Select Board meeting general discussions took place between the Select Board and members of the Historical Society regarding a lease arrangement for 38 Main Street. Chair Bates said he talked with Ms. Garratt-Reed and Mr. Pierson last week and was very encouraged by what he saw (the beginnings of a business plan). Chair Bates asked Mr. Pierson and Ms. Garratt-Reed to speak on the issue.

Mr. Pierson and Ms. Garratt-Reed distributed a packet of material, titled "St. George Historical Society, Inc., Old Library Subcommittee Mission Statement¹ with Short & Long-Term Plans"

and a handout regarding local historical societies in the surrounding area. ¹Subject to approval of lease between the Town and the Historical Society.

Mr. Pierson and Ms. Garratt-Reed spoke on behalf of the Historical Society Trustees. They had met with Chair Bates and spoke to the concerns they thought the community might have. Pierson said some parts of the Historical Society had been run very efficiently while other parts had not been run as well, which he thought was typical. The Lighthouse Association has done a terrific job so, the Historical Society will not make any changes.

Mr. Pierson said the Schoolhouse Museum needed more attention but was confident that through the fall, the committee could bring the museum up to par, making sure it is safe, that they have the right items inside, have a schedule of opening times, and report on what is happening at the museum.

Ms. Garratt-Reed said she spoke with Mrs. Schmanska who said the middle grade students still do a unit on St. George history and are very anxious to get more involved in the schoolhouse museum. Mrs. Schmanska relayed to Ms. Garratt-Reed that the students had discussed how important it was to keep a community viable and what keeps a community viable.

Mr. Pierson said questions have arisen as to how much property does the Historical Society need? Could they use the schoolhouse museum for display? It is a nice representation of an old schoolhouse but to put other nonrelated items in it would be ineffective. Also, the building is not heated.

Mr. Pierson said the Library opened in 1935. The land at 38 Main Street had been donated by the four Long sisters and the house was left to the town by Mary Elinor Jackson. The house was moved by WPA labor to the Main Street site. Mr. Pierson said the Historical Society felt the because of this history, they believed it had closer ties to the Old Library than others would have.

Mr. Pierson felt they have the capability, with the town's support, of using it to its fullest. There are many historical items scattered throughout the town in people's homes which need to be grouped together and stored properly as well as the many photographs Mr. Falla has gathered. Mr. Pierson believes within two to three years, the Society could have a good representation of historical displays. He believes this will be an opportunity for the Historical Society to share their work with townspeople, people new to the town, or people who have never lived here but had ancestors from St. George.

Mr. Pierson said the last item the Historical Society discussed was the Robinson House. He said in the next two to four weeks, the issue of what to do about the Robinson House would be examined, and some decisions would be made. The plan is to discuss what its short-term use and long-term use will be.

Ms. Garratt-Reed said she had researched what towns surrounding St. George had Historical Societies and what they had for buildings. She noted that every town around St. George had a Historical Society and the town's society had from one to four buildings. Most of the Societies were established in the late 1960's to early 1970's, and she believes that was a period when that

generation realized how important history was and the need to maintain it. Ms. Garratt-Reed said, "Historical Societies are very vital and active and to me are a way of building community. The people here are proud to be from St. George and they like to share that information."

Chair Bates summarized their meeting on Thursday. He said, "First, the Historical Society has the material that is needed for a museum. There are plenty of items. Secondly, the Historical Society has the financial resources to operate and run this building as a museum and an office. The Society is planning fundraisers. Thirdly, most importantly is they convinced me that there is the enthusiasm and commitment to make it work and happen." Mr. Pierson said they believe there is enough support in the community to make it work.

Suzanne Luzius spoke to the issue. Ms. Luzius said she worked at Stonefish and had been in the retail business with Anne Klapfish for 15 years. She has seen what the business has done for the community and the continuity that it has brought to the retail businesses from Stonefish to the gift shop at the Lighthouse.

Ms. Luzius said not too many years ago, the town offered the building to Anne Klapfish because the town did not want to be landlords. She said fortunately, Anne chose not to buy it but Ms. Luzius said, "There is to this day a ready, willing, and able buyer with cash to buy the building, install a septic tank and keep the building in well repair and replicate her business as it is, starting with \$3.00 cards, \$10 items. This is not a fancy above line store. You can spend some money in there, but they do a lot of small business which I think some of the people in the community might have missed by not coming in."

Ms. Luzius said she is not representing the potential buyer and has nothing to gain by this but just wanted to come and let the Select Board know that after 15 years, she sees what a commitment to the community a retail business can have and how appreciated it is by so many people. She said they have had endless people since Anne died come in and say please don't close this store.

Chair Bates said he and Mr. Polky did meet with a potential buyer and discussed her view of how it could work. His sense was that it would be an option. But at the same time, he thought what the Historical Society could do for the town. It would attract a different group of people; but nonetheless it would attract people.

Ms. Luzius said it has to be open to people; it has to be available to people. Chair Bates said the Historical Society's Mission Statement indicated the headquarters and business office would be opened, staffed, and ready. Ms. Luzius asked if it would be staffed and ready for people to come in at accommodating times, not just on the weekends.

Ms. Luzius said she was in favor of the Historical Society but felt she needed to come and offer this to the full committee simply because there had been so much conversation about it. Chair Bates noted that Ms. Luzius represented a group of people in town that would like to see it continue as a store and there is another group in town who sees the potential as a Historical Society. Chair Bates said Stonefish has been an attraction to the town but hopes that in a couple of years, people will see the Historical Society building as likewise, another jewel on the

peninsula. He thought they should be optimistic and recognize the enthusiasm that is there for this project.

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall to discuss a lease agreement with the St. George Historical Society for the 38 Main St. property to serve as their headquarters and a museum. The vote was 4-0-1 (Willey abstained). The motion carried.

Chair Bates distributed a revised draft copy of the lease agreement. Several changes were made to Mr. Falla's agreement. In the lease, Chair Bates said he included that it will be an active museum, the structure will be maintained in good order and repair, and the Town may get into the building at reasonable times.

Selectperson Hall asked, "Who fixes the roof?" Chair Bates said he changed the wording to say that the Society will maintain the premises in good order and repair, and the intention of that wording is that the Society should fix the roof.

A motion was made by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, to authorize Chair Bates and Town Manager Polky to negotiate a lease for the 38 Main Street property with the Trustees of the St. George Historical Society. The vote was 4-0-1 (Willey abstained). Motion carried.

Chair Bates suggested he and Mr. Polky, and the Trustees of the Historical Society meet over the next week and that they may or may not have an agreement by the next Select Board meeting.

James Skoglund, former president of the St. George Historical Society, thanked the town for their support. Mr. Skoglund said, "I want to thank the town for their support over the years for the Historical Society. When started we had no idea what direction the Society would take or what would happen, but it has been a great success thanks to the assistance of the, I think, of the enlightened town officers that we have had over the years. I have half-way faded into the background, though, but I am so delighted that the Historical Society has been such a success. It really has done a great deal for the town. Thank you all."

- Town Office Vacation Time: The Select Board reviewed Office Manager Tara Elwell's request that the Town Office be closed on the following dates for the following reasons:

- August 27, 2019 – TRIO training (in all aspects of the software program) for all the Administrative staff. A number of the staff are new employees and have not had professional training on TRIO. Ms. Elwell said the cross training of employees is also an office priority.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall to close the office on August 27, 2019 for TRIO and staff training. The vote was 5-0; motion carried.

- October 2, 2019 – Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Conference in Bangor. In prior years, staff has attended this training. This is a two-day training, but Ms. Elwell is only requesting one day for office staff to attend.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall to close the office on October 2, 2019 for the staff to attend the MMA Conference. The vote was 5-0; motion carried.

- December 23, 2019 through December 27, 2019 – The Christmas Holiday is on Wednesday, December 25th.

Ms. Elwell said the office usually closes at noon the day before the holiday, and employees usually take a personal day, the day after the holiday. Ms. Elwell noted that many of the employees accrued a lot of vacation time due to events that happened last year, and it would be easier if the office was closed then no one would have to worry about coming in for those (3) three business days. She said the staff had agreed to use vacation days. Mr. Polky stated employees would use vacation days for Monday, Thursday, and Friday.

Selectperson Elwell asked about the Transfer Station hours. Mr. Polky thought the Town Office might be able to close for the week but not the Transfer Station. Selectperson Willey thought people would be at the door of the town office after a couple of days of being closed, asking why the town office was not open. She said they (the Select Board) will find out what the townspeople think. Selectpersons Elwell and Sawyer said they will see how it goes.

Ms. Elwell said the plan is to advertise the December closure dates well in advance, starting in November.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to close the town office for the holiday week, effective December 23, 2019 through December 27, 2019 with town office employees using (3) three days of vacation leave. The vote was 5-0; motion carried.

- Minutes: The minutes of July 22, 2019 were amended as follows:

Page 1, paragraph 3, line 5, corrected word to Spirit.

Page 1, paragraph 5, line 4, change to read: ...it would not be nice ...

Page 4, 2nd full paragraph, line 5, change to read: ...the town insures and...Society insures contents.

Page 5, under Tax Commitment, paragraph 2, line 2, change to read: ...and the school which increased 9.6% because of the Special Education needs.

Page 5, paragraph 2, lines 3 & 6, delete % after 8.95 and 9.6.

Page 5, paragraph 3, line 2, delete % after 9.6

Page 7, under Planning Board, bullet 2, change to assessed

Page 8, under Connect St. George, line 7, correct to read: ... of 1,754 people

Page 8, under Connect St. George, lines 3 & 4, insert: ... in St. George to support education, health care, civil engagement, aging in place and local businesses rather...

Page 9, paragraph 1 corrections, line 2, change to read: ...done and we can identify...

Line 5, change to read: ...Mr. Hall added this audit is a way...

Page 11, paragraph 4, line 2, correct to read: ...so the payback would be...

Page 11, under Solar Panels, bullet 1, line 2, correct to: ...installed, etc.; these increase ...

On a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to approve the July 22, 2019 minutes, as corrected.

Boards, Committees and Commissions Minutes – July 8, 2019:

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to accept the July 8, 2018 minutes, as written.

- Communications: None.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of August 5, 2019 was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$74,981.32 and includes payment for Aerial Survey tax maps, the Fire Department's back stairs, St. George Day's fireworks and two weeks of payroll.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Fire Department Stairs - Mr. Polky reported the Fire Department's back stairs were mostly done. He said they opted to rebuild the stairs instead of installing metal ones because of designing and engineering issues, and discussions with the Fire Marshal's office. He said the brackets were not holding, so they poured a foundation underneath and will replace the brackets with two, 4' steel pipes. The stairs will be stained.

Paving - Performance Paving is supposed to start paving on Wednesday, August 7th, but Mr. Polky thinks the start date will be delayed because of the rain. Wallston Road, Fogerty Corner, Taylor's Point, and the beginning of English Town West will be paved. Also being paved, is a section in front of the bottle room at the Transfer Station. The frost heaves the pavement and the door cannot be opened and during winter rainstorms water comes in. The section in front of the two doors will be dropped down and paved.

Discussion with DOT Region 2 Supervisor – Mr. Polky said he has a scheduled meeting with the DOT supervisor on Tuesday, August 6 to discuss the roads, particularly Rt. 131 and Rt. 73 and what the state is currently doing, and what the state will be doing in the future.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported on the following. The CC met on August 1 at 4 p.m. The parking lot at Meadow Brook Preserve has been started and the committee is very pleased with the progress.

Dale Pierson gave an update on the Invasive program held at Blueberry Cove. Approximately 30 people attended the program at Blueberry Cove. Mr. Pierson commended the CC on how well maintained the footpaths and trails were in the town, and specifically mentioned Jones Brook Trail.

Selectperson Willey said Bill Zierden was a guest speaker at the CC meeting and talked about climate change. She said he was working with another group outside of the town and he wanted to make people aware that we all need to understand the issue and work to make changes. Ms. Willey said Herring Gut Learning Center was working to understand the issue and trying to get the students involved and to educate them on climate change.

The CC and Maine Coast Heritage Trust are working together to hold another open house at Clark Island on August 17th.

The kiosk has been installed at the Bamford Preserve and the footpath is still being worked on.

The CC will hold an educational program on "Sea Level Rise" on Thursday, August 29, 7 p.m. at the Town Office.

Selectperson Willey talked with the CC regarding the PACE Program. The CC thought a better group to work on this issue was the Community Development Corporation (CDC). Ms. Willey said she would talk with Ms. Kennedy to see if they had any interest in working with the PACE Program.

Selectperson Sawyer asked if a tourist showed up at the town office and asked if there were walking trails around town, what would the answer be? Selectperson Willey said yes, there are. She said there is a map on the town website but is not sure if the CC has a brochure with this information on it. Chair Bates said the kiosks have the information.

Mr. Polky asked if she would contact the CC to see if they would make available some flyers for the town office. Ms. Willey said the CC is working on a brochure for invasive species, so perhaps they could create a brochure for the footpaths and trails.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met at 7:00 p.m. on July 23, 2019.

- The building application to construct a wharf, ramp and float for year-round access at Teal Island was accepted as complete and, with the DEP and Army Corp permits already granted, and satisfying section 15-C of the Shoreland Zoning ordinance, it was approved.

- The building application to expand an accessory building within the stream buffer zone at 254 Island Avenue was accepted as complete, and satisfying section 12-C-1-c-i of the Shoreland Zoning ordinance, it was approved.

The Board will be meeting with Bill Najpauer at 6:00 p.m. on August 13 to see if he can help as a consultant with draft revisions to the Town's planning ordinances; Mr. Najpauer is currently the Planner and Community Development Director for Rockport, and previously as Waldoboro's Planning and Development director.

- Note from Ben Vail: Chair Bates reported that if anyone wanted to add anything to the town Newsletter, get a note back to Mr. Vail by August 20th.

- CDC Open House: Selectperson Willey reported that the CDC had their open house which was very well attended.

OLD BUSINESS: The two items were taken up under Regular Session.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Engagement Letter with William Brewer, CPA: On January 28, 2019, the Select Board voted to select William Brewer, CPA to conduct year-end audits for the Town of St. George and St. George MSU. The Select Board reviewed William Brewer's engagement letter to the town, and Chair Bates signed the letter.

- Invitation from Mike Felton to Attend a Meeting on Community Needs: Chair Bates received a note from Mr. Felton inviting the Select Board to attend a meeting on August 29th at 2 p.m. to give input on the community needs for any changes to the school infrastructure.

- Revised Municipal Tax Rate Calculation Standard Forms for 2018 and 2019: Chair Bates stated that Linda Lucas, an agent from the State's Property Tax Division, was here in July to review the town's paperwork and forms. Ms. Lucas found an error in the 2018 Homestead Exemptions granted due to the incorrect application of the Certified Ratio. The total exempt value resulted in the State overpaying the Homestead Reimbursement by \$15,670.33. Chair Bates said the State wants to be paid back.

Chair Bates added, "However, the forms we signed two weeks ago, we did not have the right value of the real estate and there are various illusions today about the problems with TRIO and how the interface is horrible." He said Ms. Lucas found an error in the total taxable valuation of real estate due to the omission of several exemptions: tree growth, farmland, farm woodland and open space. Adding the exemptions back into the taxable valuation of real estate resulted in an increase in Tax for Commitment and Overlay by \$43,640.64.

Chair Bates noted the net result of these two corrections:
 $\$43,640.64 - \$15,670.33 = \$27,970.31$ increase in Overlay for 2019-2020.

Chair Bates said the Overlay requirement is two months but with this correction, the town's Overlay is approximately three months.

The Select Board reviewed and signed the Revised Maine Tax Rate and Calculation Standard Forms for 2018 and 2019.

Selectperson Sawyer said he will not be at the August 19 Select Board due to a prior commitment.

At 8:55 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary