

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 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, Beth Smith, Nick Lapham, Crystal Tarjick, David Percival, Jeff Shaw and Robert Kelley.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- Signing of the 2019 Municipal Valuation Report was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- Town Concerns with 2020 County Budget was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- Community Development Corporation presentation by Robert Kelley was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- Quarterly Financial Review was moved from New Business to Regular Session
- An update on the status of solar panels and billing issues was added under Old Business

- Sign 2019 Municipal Valuation Report: Beth Smith, Administrative Assistant, presented the 2019 Municipal Valuation Report to the Select Board. Smith said she referred to the prior two years when completing this year's report. She stated the calculations were supported by documentation from Trio and numbers from the State. Smith added the State would let her know if the calculations were off.

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, to approve and sign the 2019 Municipal Valuation Report as completed. The vote was 5-0.

- Town Concerns with 2020 County Budget: District 1 Representative Nick Lapham presented an overview on the 2020 Knox County budget. He noted the Budget Committee had two departments left to review and they would take those up on Thursday, November 7, 2019. A public hearing on the budget was scheduled for December 5 at 6 p.m.

Chair Bates told Lapham the Select Board had discussed the 2020 County budget at their last meeting. Bates said regretfully the town of St. George had crossed the one million-dollar threshold because the budget had gone up and the town's relative valuation had gone up, so the town would be paying more. Lapham said his understanding was that the formula was set by the State.

Chair Bates thought the town was satisfied with services provided by the Knox County Sheriff's Department. The deputy sheriffs appeared to be in the area more often, the town seemed to be

getting good patrols, and when the sheriff was needed for an emergency, the responsiveness was good. Lapham noted the Sheriff's Office and the jail account for 71% of the budget and the Sheriff's Department's had a 3% increase. He anticipated that the Committee would have the final figures for the health insurance and workman's compensation at the November 7 meeting.

Lapham stated the jail budget increased by 4%. A couple of reasons for the increase were: the budget was readjusted as the department completed a review of all the job descriptions and grading systems. Capital needs issues had to be addressed and have begun working on some of those. Lapham said he was present one time when the jail's system went down and everything had to be locked down manually. He felt the Sheriff's Office and the jail managed their budgets remarkably well, given what they have to do.

Chair Bates thought the EMA seemed responsive. Lapham said he was not at the meeting when they reviewed that department, but EMA had a 15% increase in their budget. Lapham said he did have a question about the budget, but he had met with the EMA Director a number of different times and felt comfortable the agency was managing vigilantly.

Lapham stated deed income was down in the Registry of Deeds Department, but that was a function of the housing market and property transactions.

There was a budget increase for the Sheriff's Office, Communications Office, and the Public Safety building because some issues occurred, and they had to spend \$40,000 which they had not planned for.

Chair Bates told Lapham about two months ago, the Select Board voted to join the MCEDD and would be paying approximately \$3,600. Lapham believed the cost was based on a flat fee, but Selectperson Hall thought when billed through the county, it would be on a per capita basis and partly on evaluation. Lapham said he would look into that. He added that the Committee had spent a great deal of time discussing this department and the area of regional planning. Lapham did think the budget would be approved this year, though he was not sure how the program would be managed in the future.

Lapham explained the Budget Committee and Commissioners voting process on the County budget. Lapham said there would be discussions on the budget, and he had some concerns about the \$8,321,925.00 amount.

Chair Bates said Dispatch Services had issues in the past, but he felt that it was going quite well now. He stated that communications were stable as mutual aid calls were getting called correctly. Lapham said they hired a new Director and this department was in the process of changing from analog to digital equipment.

Selectperson Hall added the Select Board's interest in the MCEDD was at the suggestion of the Planning Board who asked about joining to gain assistance with writing ordinances and for other planning functions. Chair Bates said ultimately, it could be valuable as a regional planning group, yet he sensed that MCEDD may not be ready to be a Regional Planning group; but at a local town level, they could come in and help with ordinances.

Lapham said the group did have some collective buying agreements that all the members could benefit from in terms of basic supplies. MCEDD's biggest contribution was in grant writing. But Lapham said his question was, "What are the Regional County planning needs and how are they doing that? The Regional County facilities that we have, the Sheriff's Office, the jail, the airport, the courthouse, but I can see where there would be needs for transportation planning at some point."

Polky said, "We used to have the Mid Coast Regional Planning Commission. There was some competition for a while, but MCRPC didn't have the staff and the resources. At one time, we depended on that group to do a lot of things like traffic planning, grant writing and ordinance support, etc., and MCRPC represented Knox, Lincoln and Waldo counties. The last dozen years, they had a problem keeping staff that could meet our needs. But I think we need something on a regional basis. Someone that can look regionally on some of this planning, not necessarily the courthouse but how is our shoreland zoning ordinance going to affect Cushing or how is it going to affect So. Thomaston or Bremen?"

Lapham said, "The other thing people have brought up is managing certain issues in terms of managing the coastline from Friendship, all the way up. I think they do spend a fair amount of time on initiatives related to that. In theory, I can see benefits to it; I just am not 100% sold on how it is going to work in practice. Other than the towns that are working with them seem content to keep going on although they would like the county to pick up the tab, now."

Chair Bates, "St. George's decision to join was made before we knew about any plans to get the whole county involved, and I think St. George made the decision to join the MCEDD group for very good reasons and it is going to be important for us."

Selectperson Willey said, "I think we had discussed for this year being part of that group because they are doing it with the head count, \$1.25 per head and we are paying \$3,200. They are also looking at town evaluations and maybe changing the way they look at things, so we were going to wait, going forward. We had a question of that in previous minutes. We discussed it. We wanted to wait and look and see what was going to happen, going forward."

Lapham said, "The argument they made all along is it is per capita whether the county pays it or whether the municipality pays it."

Lapham added, "I have a high regard for the people who run those departments. I think they are very diligent and vigilant about managing the people's money."

- Community Development Corporation (CDC): Robert Kelley gave a six-month overview of the CDC program. Kelley explained the structure of the CDC and its current programs.

The Community Cupboard (the food pantry) is now run by volunteer Jeff Shaw. At this point in terms of volunteer hours, volunteer contribution and dollars spent, the Community Cupboard (CC) is the largest part of CDC's operation.

The CDC is focused in several key areas: access to health care, access to education and access to workforce housing and community and economic development. Small programs such as the opioid movie series done last year to medium size functions such as the Thanksgiving meal are done yearly. This year's Thanksgiving dinner will be held on Sunday, November 24. Last year, over 100 people attended this dinner. Some programs are meant to build community development, and some are meant to be far more constructive.

The CDC was very appreciative of the Select Board's consideration in the acquisition of 40 Long Cove Road and their collaboration with Habitat for Humanity (HH). Kelley said they are planning the details on the tear down of that structure to make the site safer before construction begins.

Preliminary planning for the HH house had not yet been done because Habitat was busy developing the Philbrick project in Rockland, and HH asked the CDC to coordinate the demolition. The CDC has been looking for people who have the experience and can do the demo work safely. They have been trying to find someone who is willing to donate some of their time and effort as part of the tear down. The CDC has not finalized anything to date but hopes something will take place in the next month or two.

Habitat's greatest challenge is identifying qualified families and have not started that process because they are busy with the Philbrick project. The CDC thought it made sense to do the demo first, get the site safe then get into the developments.

The CDC collaborated with Window Dressers to co-sponsor an AmeriCorps member. The volunteer's time is being split with the Maine Campus Compact (partnership for Environmental Stewardship). He is currently working with Window Dressers in Rockland until January when he then will be available in St. George to perform energy audits, energy programming, energy education, potential projects around winterization, and other types of energy home improvement projects. He is a hard worker and he is working out well. It is the CDC's first experience in having an AmeriCorps member.

Chair Bates asked if members of the community would apply to the CDC to have an energy audit. Kelley said they have not worked that out. Window Dressers does an energy audit as part of their evaluation, but the CDC discussed having the AmeriCorps volunteer perform more general energy audits and provide advisory energy saving suggestions to community members.

The most relevant and most important work the CDC does is in the area of social services in the following areas:

- Sponsoring yearly clinics on Medicare, Medicaid, and ACA enrollment programs and has worked with over 40 community members this last year.
- Aging in Place programs. The next program is a fall prevention seminar.
- Community Education Programs on Opioids. The CDC is working to do follow ups to the opioid movie series.
- Social Service referrals. For example, if someone comes into the town, they are most always referred to the CDC for additional services that might be available at the County

level or through other social service agencies. They provide a network to the rest of the available social services in the community.

- Mobile dental clinic. The CDC held a clinic in May and had 16 students and adults in the program. The CDC polled the community before they advertised the one scheduled at the end of November. There are 28 confirmed with a long waiting list. The plan is to hold the dental clinic twice a year going forward. Maine Care is accepted, and the CDC set some money aside for people who do not have Maine Care or could not afford the co-pay.

The Community Advisory Committee has discussed holding eye care clinics, but the program would take a great deal of work to get started. The Committee will continue to work on and discuss this area of need.

Chair Bates said the town's Budget Committee was reviewing the social service programs. He felt with the addition of the mobile dental clinic and the work at the Community Cupboard pantry, he would rather see money go to the CDC than to other agencies where it was less clear on how the money was being dispersed.

Tarjick said the Budget Committee would communicate with the Select Board and come back with further information on what the social services agencies do for the town, how many people they provide for, and the cost to benefit analysis.

Kelley said if the town wanted to engage the CDC more closely and wanted the CDC to do more of these services, they would make their detailed budgets available or whatever was helpful. Selectperson Elwell's sentiment was if a program could be done in town, the money should stay in town.

- The Community Cupboard (CC) supplies food and hygiene supplies. The CDC has a higher service level than any of the other food pantries in the area. The CC allows families to come weekly and limits only certain kinds of foods such as meat and some paper products. (A family can go to AIO once a month and get three days of food.)

Over 70 households in St. George have been served since opening and the CC is currently serving 41 households or 102 individuals in the community. Fifty-three (53) per cent are adults; thirty-seven (37) percent are children; ten (10) percent are seniors over 65 years old.

The CC was recently certified to be supported by Good Shepherd, the statewide food pantry. This means the CC now gets some discounted foods. Being supported by Good Shepherd is a big deal because Jeff Shaw participates in a regional group that shares best practices and ideas. Good Shepherd recently did a surprise visit, and did a walk through, which turned out extremely well. The CC's biggest months are March, April and May. They currently distribute about 2,500 pounds of food a month.

Kelley stated that the community has been incredibly generous in donating food. The majority of the goods in terms of poundage is donated by the community. That said, the CC will spend about \$12,000 on food this year. If they had more, they would do more.

- A Community garden at the library. This year they opened a community garden in collaboration with Jackson Memorial Library. There were eight plots, six actively worked.

The 2019 budget aggregate was \$79,000, all donations, except for the \$5,000 from the town. Their 2020 very draft budget will be up to approximately \$96,000.00. That includes one (almost) full-time employee and covering all of the operations. Although the CDC is a nonprofit, they own the building and have two paying tenants, so they are property taxpayers in the community. The \$5,000 received last year from the town primarily was targeted as part of the food budget for the Community Cupboard and part of the funds were distributed to the social service work Alane's does which is approximately 5 to 10 hours a week.

There are currently 144 community members who volunteer on committees and at events such as Thanksgiving dinner or who donate food.

Smaller social service projects:

- The Coat Drive. The CDC holds a yearly coat drive for the community.
- The Giving Tree Program at Christmas.
- Other dollar donations. Kelley said referrals come from the town but also a lot of referrals come from the school.

- Quarterly Financial Review: The Select Board and Budget Committee members Crystal Tarjick and David Percival reviewed the quarterly financial report in the following areas:

- Utilities. They are underbudget by a considerable amount. Polky noted heating oil falls under this category and the heating season had not quite started.
- Fire Department. Polky reported the stairs were complete. The price was less because they used different materials for the stairs. A non-skid surface was used on the treads but there is a problem with those so something else may need to be done. Tarjick asked if there is a potential plan for the balance of that budget item? Polky thinks it will probably lapse.
- Contract Roads/Contract Services. Polky stated it was for anything the town does for contract and in this case, it was for Jim Kalloch; however, there were other items under this line such as tree removal.
- Fuel. Polky noted #8162 was fuel for the equipment. He said they were using the new excavator at the Transfer Station for almost everything.
- Solid Waste. "What are supplies and why are they so high?" Polky said his rule about supplies was anything bought that had a life expectancy of less than one year, and this includes uniforms and boots for the staff.
- Animal Control. "Will the veterinary bill be given to the owner of the dog who was taken to the veterinarian as a stray but had an owner?" Polky said if the animal goes to the vet and they do not know who the owner is, the town gives permission to treat the

stray. The owner can voluntarily pay the bill, but cost of recouping can be more than the actual bill, so the town may not always recoup on a bill.

- Trust Fund. Appreciation/Depreciation? It is unrealized gains and losses.

- Minutes: The minutes of October 21, 2019 were amended as follows:

Page 1, under Minutes, line 2 of the motion, correct vote to 4-0.

Page 3, under Town Manager's report, corrections made in paragraph 2, line 2, change to read:

...The person in a car...

Line 8, change to read: ..., no one was seriously hurt.

Page 3, paragraph 3, line 1, change to read: ...being inspected and Tim thought the...

Page 4, under Planning Board, bullet 3, line 1, correct word to single-family home

Page 5, paragraph 1 corrections: line 1, change to read: "Do the houses that are above the median price have the same sales...

Line 2, Ideally, with fair and equitable... remove parentheticals

Line 3, The data indicates that more expensive...

Page 6, paragraph 5, line 2. Delete second sentence as it is unclear.

Page 7, under County Budget corrections: paragraph 1, line 1, change to read: ...noted the Town's contribution to the County budget...

Line 2, change to read: ...it was partly due to the...

Paragraph 2, lines 4 & 5, change to read: to use them, if it is a county membership versus if we sign up as a town, ...

Paragraph 3, line 5, change word county to organization

Page 8, line 1, change to read: Polky thought another advantage to belonging...

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall to approve the minutes, as corrected. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

- Communications: The following communications were received.

- Thank you letters from the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Coastal Opportunities and AIO.
- A copy of the letter sent to Sally Robinson Long stating she would be presented with the Spirit of America award on Tuesday, November 12, 2019.
- A letter from RSU 13 Superintendent of Schools. RSU 13 is holding a strategic plan review "Envisioning the Schools of Our Future" on October 29, 2019. This date conflicts with the "School Building Community Survey and Meeting" scheduled by St. George MSU with the architectural firm, Oak Point Associates.
- An update report from the Maine Community Foundation regarding their current activities and support for communities.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of November 4, 2019 was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$104,916.84 and includes two weeks of payroll, a J.K. Kalloch payment of \$21,230.50, and a health insurance payment of \$4,822.50. Chair Bates asked what Larry's Portable Welding Service was for. Polky stated Larry made 12 posts which hold the ropes up around the open top containers at the Transfer Station. These posts were required by the town's insurance company.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget Committee: Selectperson Hall reported on the Budget Committee. The committee met and has been working on and reviewing overlaps in social service agencies the town donates money to. Hall said they divided up the organizations that were previously mentioned and some members had already met with the heads of these agencies.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met on October 22, 2019 at 7 p.m.

The application at 55 Herman's Road to build a longer ramp and larger float was accepted as complete; satisfying section 15-C of the Shoreland Zoning ordinance, it was approved, contingent on getting the Army Corps of Engineers permit.

- Cemetery Committee: Selectperson Hall stated the cemetery committee met and he would bring up the discussion item later in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Solar Panels and Billing Issues: Selectperson Hall reported that he had reviewed the CMP and ReVision bills. He said he understood the issue of not having a way to understand in total what the Transfer Station was using in electricity because the CMP bills only show the amount of power generated over and above the power used at the transfer station when the system is running.

Hall said, "So, you don't really know what the Transfer Station used. But, what you do know is how much was generated if you look at the ReVision bills over the past 12 months. The answer is approximately 70,000-kilowatt hours. In the run up to this, the projected usage by the town was in the vicinity of 90,000 kilowatt hours. So, this meshes pretty well. This is going to reflect the amount generated that we are not seeing on the CMP bills because it is netting out at the Transfer Station. In fact, it is a little less than what I would expected us to have generated in the last 12 months, but we've had problems with the system. Inverters have gone out, so it has not been producing up to capacity. So, I would expect something closer to 80,000 to 85,000 kilowatt hours being produced during the year. My take on this is we are not being overbilled from ReVision, in fact, the system has not generated as much as I would have hoped it would generate in this last 12-month period.

The other issue from looking at the bills is that because of the way it is being allocated, it is 32% to the Transfer Station; 61% to the Town Office/Fire Station; and the balance getting spread over the other locations. We are building up a bank at the Transfer Station that is a little concerning. Maybe when winter comes, the bank will get worked off, but we have talked in the past about changing from allocating the amount generated on a percentage basis to allocating the amount generated on a waterfall basis." Hall added, "We did not want to do that before because of all the problems we were having and we did not want to confuse the issue further, but I would advocate that we now request that change." Hall said, "The town may be okay, but the town may see credits lapse if they do not change its allocation."

Chair Bates said the recommendation was to get the CMP Net Energy Billing Coordinator (Diana Morgan) to move to the waterfall allocation of power. Selectperson Hall said the town was also working down the credit balances which was a good thing. Chair Bates felt having an extra meter installed was still a good idea. Selectperson Hall thought the questions were how much would it cost and did the town want to pay for an extra meter? He said it would allow you to verify the numbers they are billing.

Polky said he would like to have a meeting with Nick Sampson, Hall, Bates, Terri-Lynn Baines and himself to look at the waterfall allocation and look at the cost of installing another meter. Polky said they could try to get a CMP contact at that meeting as well, but he was not sure that would happen. Polky will set up a meeting up.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Tim Polky reported it had been an interesting couple of weeks at the town office between fire trucks colliding and storms. Polky said since the previous storm, the town had taken in 90 cubic yards of brush. He told the Transfer Station not to charge people if it was related to the storm, but he wanted an accounting. Polky said it had been good because people had been cleaning up brush that the town would have cleaned up. Power was out longer than normal for places that had not seen long stretches of power outages – mainly Rt. 131.

Fire Department Tank 3 that was involved in the collision on Clark Island Road during the fire was at Reliance Equipment in Vassalboro. The truck had cosmetic damage. An old pipe had to be replaced due to pits in the pipe and rust. Polky informed the Select Board that the Fire Department needed to have the other pumps tested. This expense would most likely show up on the warrant at the next billing session.

The Maine Municipal Association Loss-Prevention agent came down in August. Several items required attention were:

- License checks on personnel involved with the Fire Department and the Transfer Station and Polky said that is being done.
- Railing needed to be placed around the open top containers at the Transfer Station.
- Some type of containment around the loading ramp at the Salt Shed.
- Hold a training session for anyone who works at a computer terminal for more than four hours a shift. MMA offers this training and will send a trainer down.
- Emergency lighting needs to be fixed at all town buildings. Polky was not sure why the lights are not working, but they will be working on that.

Beavers have become problem again on Ridge Road. Approximately three years ago, the town hired a trapper from Waldoboro and at that time he trapped five beavers. Polky said the cost was \$40 per beaver. Polky said they need to remove the beavers from that area before they get established, otherwise the water washes across the road.

New trail openings/ribbon cutting ceremonies will be held on Sunday, November 10, 2019. The ceremony for the Bamford Preserve on Long Cove Road will be at 1 p.m. and the ceremony for Meadow Brook Preserve on Turkey Cove Road will be at 3 p.m. Polky said the Conservation Commission would like to have representation of town officials at these ceremonies.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Adoption of General Assistance Ordinance Amendments: The Select Board received a copy of the State of Maine's GA Ordinance Amendments. Chair Bates noted several increases in General Assistance: Food maximums increased by 1%; burial and cremations increasing 31%. The overall maximum increase was 3%.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to adopt the General Assistance Ordinance Amendments for the Town of St. George.

- Quitclaim Deed for Tax Acquired Property: Terri-Lynn Baines presented the Select Board with a quitclaim deed transferring property located on Map 218, Lot 040A to Glen and Diane Haight. Polky said Administration had to write up a deed description on this property because there was none. The Select Board signed the deed.

- Approve Select Board Policy Manual, up to page 25: On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Elwell, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Policy Manual changes as discussed at the October 21, 2019 Select Board meeting.

- Annual Review of Select Board Policy Manual, pages 26-50: The Select Board reviewed pages 26-50 for corrections, changes, and updates. Chair Bates volunteered to take responsibility to document the changes and see that the policy manual is updated.

- Freedom of Access Act: The Select Board reviewed the Maine Freedom of Access Act. Chair Bates reminded members of the following policy. "Members of the body should refrain from the use of email as a substitute for deliberations or deciding substantive matters. Email is permissible to communicate with other members about non-substantive matters such as scheduling, developing agendas and disseminating information and reports."

- Meeting Continued Beyond 9 p.m.: On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to continue the Select Board meeting beyond 9 p.m.

- Clark Hill Cemetery: Selectperson Hall said the Cemetery Committee discussed Clark Hill Cemetery which is a small cemetery on Clark Hill Road. Hall reported the following information.

The cemetery started as a family plot then more and more lots were sold. They did not sell just the right to bury people; they sold the physical pieces of land where the people were buried. Some of these plots were filed at the registry and some were not, so there are a lot of little pieces of land that the title was conveyed to the families of the people who were buried there.

There is no cemetery association, per se. but Patti St. Clair is the sole person with the responsibility for looking out for this cemetery. It is financially self-sustaining at this point. It gets money from the perpetual care fund which is enough to cover the four or five mowing's per year that it requires. The soil is sandy, and grass does not grow well so it is not very expensive to care for.

The committee discussed having Clark Hill cemetery follow the path of Seaside Cemetery, to tackle this and figure how this might be approached. The plan is to go to MMA for assistance, but before the Committee starts asking questions and digging into this further, they want to be sure the Select Board will be inclined towards the town taking over the responsibility for the care and maintenance of the Clark Hill Cemetery. Hall said if the Select Board is against recommending it to the town, then the committee will stop.

Selectperson Willey asked how the town can take over the cemetery when lots are owned by many different people. Selectperson Hall said the perimeter is owned by people in tax limbo so there could possibly be a negotiated settlement, and the people who own lots could agree to the forfeit the title of their lots and turn them over to the town. He said there may be a lot of people that cannot be tracked down. Selectperson Elwell asked if most are deceased, how could they turn over the deed? Polky said it is not a large cemetery and there are not that many families. Polky thinks it will take some time, but it can be done. Hall said it will require working through some detail. The Cemetery Committee is not meeting again until January 22, 2020.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to support the request of the Cemetery Committee to investigate the possibility of the town of St. George taking over the responsibility of the care and maintenance of the Clark Hill Cemetery. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

At 9:12 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