

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2020 – 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: Terri-Lynn Baines, Tim Polky, Van Thompson, Susy Ellis, Dave Percival, and Scott Vaitones.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- Quarterly Financial Review was moved from New Business and taken up under Regular Session
- Town Manager's FY'20-21 Proposed Budget Presentation was moved from New Business and taken up under Regular Session

- Second Quarter Financial Review: Budget Committee Chair Susy Ellis led the discussion on the Quarterly Review.

Town Office:

- Utilities. This line item is underbudget. Ms. Ellis stated the committee was impressed with the lower utility costs under the town office line. Baines told them they were taking advantage of the CMP credits.
- Salaries. Ellis noted quite a range in salaries - from 40% to 50% but it is due to changes in personnel.
- Professional Services. This line is under budget.
- Insurance. This line item is higher because of the timing of the insurance payment.

Select Board and Assessors:

- Abatements. Chair Bates anticipates an increase in this line item.

Planning Board: No questions.

Fire Department: Ms. Ellis stated fire department trucks from Owl's Head and St. George were damaged in a collision on Clark Island Road while attending to a house fire and asked what the cost to the town would be for repair/replacement of the fire trucks. Polky said St. George had its insurance through MMA. Damage to the St. George fire truck was around \$12,000. The Owl's Head Fire Department truck was totaled and would cost about \$325,000 for a replacement truck. He stated the MMA insurance would pay for most of the damage to the St. George truck and most likely pay for replacement of the Owl's Head fire truck. Polky thought this probably would affect the town's experience/insurance rates.

- Gas and Oil. This line item shows an increase. Polky stated that after the collision of the fire trucks in October, the Bureau of Labor and the town's insurance company said the

firefighters need to drive more. He expects this item will be at an increased level for the next six to twelve months.

- Equipment Purchases. This line item is underbudget. Polky said they generally buy equipment at the end of the budget period but some items such as gear for new volunteers have been purchased.

Animal Control: No questions.

Roads & Property Management:

- Streetlights. Ms. Ellis asked how many streetlights are in town. Polky said there are 107 to 111 streetlights but several of these may be private. He will know the exact number when CMP gives him a buyout figure. Polky said the town needs to purchase the old lights (which are on the poles now) and purchase new LED lights with the idea of paying that back over four or five years.
- Contract Services. Ms. Ellis stated this line could run over budget. Polky thinks contract services will run close to the appropriated amount but might run slightly over.

Solid Waste & Recycling:

- Supplies. This line items shows an increase because new SW&R vehicle permit decals/stickers were purchased.
- Transportation. This line item shows a 25% increase compared to last year's quarter. Polky believes this item is in good standing as the third quarter is usually the lowest in expenditures.
- Special Waste. This line shows an increase during this quarter. Polky stated there are no regular shipments of the Special Waste; they wait until they have a full load before shipping, and there are now some items that have to be paid for that were previously shipped for free.

Social & Community Services:

- Broadreach. Because this agency closed, the approved expenditure of \$1,225 was not paid out.

Parks & Recreation:

- Senior Program. This line item shows minimal spending during this quarter. Polky noted there is revenue from the Senior Program that will be posted next quarter.

Harbors:

- Debt Payment. The last debt payment will be July 2024.

Unclassified:

- Family Health. This line item is overbudget. Chair Ellis noted that some of the Contingency Fund will need to be used to cover Family Health insurance. Chair Bates noted the overage comes from the uncertainty about the type of family plan insurance coverage new employees will sign up for.

Revenue

Town Office:

- Interest from Investments. In Mr. Vaitones' experience, he believes that municipalities and public entity schools cannot arbitrage or earn interest on borrowed money as there are laws regarding this. He suggested the Select Board and Administration might want to discuss this with the town's auditor to make sure this investment is not falling under the arbitrage laws. Polky said it is within the law, but he will talk with the auditor regarding Vaitones' question.

Solid Waste:

- Disposal Fees. Polky stated disposal fees increased. This is because people are not recycling and are willing to pay the disposal fee to dump the waste (mostly debris) into the open top containers. Polky noted transfer station fees do not seem to be enough to dissuade contractors who used to recycle.

TOWN MANAGER'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021:

Tim Polky highlighted a number of areas in the proposed budget.

Town Office:

- Wages. This line item shows a 3% wage increase for full-time employees; the CPI-W is 1.7%.
- Merit Pay. This line item shows a 1.4% increase. (Polky noted that throughout the budget, the Boards will see a discrepancy in the personnel of the payroll because there are 53 pay periods this year.)
- Software License Fees. This line item increased due to reallocation of the Town Office software modules and the Assessing software modules.
- Dues and Membership. This line item shows an increase.
- Medical. This item is listed throughout the budget. The town will start random substance abuse testing on all employees as well as EMS and Fire Department personnel. This service will be contracted out.

Select Board and Assessors:

- Revaluation Reserve. \$15,000 has been added to this line item as a revaluation needs to be done in the near future. Polky anticipates the cost of the revaluation to be \$175,000 to \$200,000. The last revaluation was done about 10 years ago and the cost then was \$165,000. At present, there is approximately \$85,000 in the reserve.

Planning Department:

- Conservation Commission. This line item shows an increase. The Commission has requested funding to explore whether the Fort Point Trail can be ABA (Architectural Barriers Act) compatible. If the trail cannot be ABA compatible, they will explore a different design. The funds requested will leverage the town's ability to apply for grants.

Fire Department:

- Equipment Maintenance. This line item shows an increase. The insurance company and Bureau of Labor requires they test their ladders and hoses. This expense will be contracted out.
- Medical. This line item shows an increase due to substance abuse testing.
- Capital. \$10,000 is being requested for the town's onsite generator. The generator is leaning/listing and needs to be lifted up and reset. Polky hopes the cost will be less than requested.

Public Safety - Animal Control: There is a vacancy for an Animal Control Officer as William Demmons has resigned due to health issues.

Public Works - Road & Property Management:

- Employee Benefits. This line item shows an increase due to wages, benefits, and the 53-week pay period.

Public Works – Solid Waste.

- Employee Benefits. This line item shows an increase due to wages and medical.
- Transportation. The Select Board and Budget Committee questions whether the amount requested will be sufficient. Polky said he will review this area again and report back with his recommendation. He also noted the Select Board has the option to increase this line item.

General Assistance: No change.

Social & Community Services:

- AIO. This organization requests an increase from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Their letter is on file.
- Neighbor to Neighbor. This organization requests an increase from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Their letter is on file.
- St. George Youth & Scouting Council. \$10,000 has been put in the budget but no letter has been received to date. The Council leader spoke with Polky and will get back to Polky about a request for funding.
- Ambulance Service. This line shows a \$30,000 increase. Polky said the Ambulance Service is increasing services under the Community Paramedicine Program. The Ambulance Service would like to hire an EMT to drive the ambulance and work with the Paramedic on duty. Polky said they are hoping they can get reimbursed enough from insurance companies to decrease the amount requested.
- Community Development Corporation. This organization requested an increase from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The CDC would like to have a housing inventory study done for the town, i.e., the town's needs. Town funding would allow the CDC to apply for low income housing grants.

Parks & Recreation:

- Employee Benefits. Increase in line item due to wages and the additional pay week in the year.
- Ball Field Maintenance. The Budget Committee will check with Ben Vail why there is an increase request for this line item.

Harbors: No substantial changes noted at this time. Increase in employee benefits due to wages and 53-week pay period.

Unclassified:

- Family Health Contingent. Increase in this line item is due to requests for health insurance coverage for family members. Polky noted this budget expense is difficult to predict.

Chair Bates noted that the Select Board, Budget Committee, and Town Manager will have more detailed discussions on the Town Manager's Proposed Budget on February 10 and 24, 2020.

- Minutes: The minutes of January 6, 2020 were amended as follows:

Page 1, under Public Comments, paragraph 3, correct word to **every one**

Page 6, corrections under Town Manager's Report, paragraph 2, line 1, correct word to **wind rows**

Paragraph 6, line 2, correct word to right-**of**-way

Paragraph 7, line 1, correct to FY'2**1** budget

Page 7, line 1, delete comma after the word as

Page 9, paragraph 1, line 5 correct to dep**u**ration

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to approve the January 6, 2020 Select Board minutes, as amended. The vote was 5-0. Motion carried.

- Communications:

- A letter from the U.S. Census Bureau asking if St. George had any changes to the town's boundaries. Mr. Polky reported no changes have been made.
- Selectperson Sawyer received an email from Josiah Wilson inquiring about scholarships. Sawyer said he sits on the scholarship committee but is not familiar with the scholarship guidelines. He encouraged Wilson to go to the town office and look into the rules.
- Selectperson Hall received an email from Bill Zierden which discussed the approach students at Mount Desert Island (MDI) took on climate change. Students at MDI went to their town Select Boards and proposed they organize a climate change task force. Zierden's email intimated that he might encourage St. George students to do the same.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of January 27, 2020 was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$538,569.00 and includes three weeks of payroll and a school payment. Chair Bates asked about the \$445.00 Bernstein Shur expense. Baines stated it was for legal work done on the John Melquist, Jr. tax acquired property. Chair Bates asked about the \$1,863.60 payment

to Southworth-Milton for the Fire Department. Polky stated it was payment for repair of the old generator.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Tim Polky reported he had been working on the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Proposed Budget, John Melquist, Jr.'s property tax issues, and streetlights.

- Salt and Sand. The town is using a lot of salt and sand. The road crew is out salting and sanding two to three times a day even though it might not be snowing.
- Solar System. The system is working quite well, and ReVision has been receptive to the town's requests.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Shellfish Committee: Selectperson Sawyer said he attended the recent committee meeting. The committee approved several of the meeting minutes but had several more to review. Since Selectperson Sawyer has not able to attend many of the Shellfish Committee meetings held on Thursdays, Chair Bates' recommendation from July is to move the meetings to another day of the week.

- Budget Committee: Selectperson Hall said the committee met prior to the Select Board meeting. He noted that the Budget Committee finished reviewing the Social & Community Services groups and had favorable reviews on them all. Hall said they found little or no overlap with the organizations. He said the committee prepared a list of concerns and suggestions and would be forwarding those to the Select Board later in the week.

- Cemetery Committee: Selectperson Hall said the committee met last week but he did not attend. Selectperson Willey attended and said the committee discussed Clark Hill Cemetery. The committee suggested they might come before the Select Board to discuss the cemetery and request funds for legal work. Selectperson Hall noted that a prior question the cemetery committee had was, "Would the Select Board be supportive of them looking for a way to transition the Clark Hill Cemetery to ownership and management by the town?" Hall said he reported back that the Select Board would look favorably on them pursuing that. Polky said he had spoken with Falla about who the committee might contact for legal advice.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates noted he was not at the 7 p.m. Planning Board meeting on January 14, 2020 but did have the following information:

The application at 37 Apple Island Road, for an addition and renovation, was reviewed and then tabled until the January 28 meeting, in order for the applicant to gather more information.

The application at 123 Mosquito Head Road, to install a trail and bridge for water access, was accepted as complete and approved.

- Ad hoc Sea Level Rise Committee: Chair Bates reported the committee met on January 14 and were planning for the Saturday, February 29, 2020 workshop. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Notes from the Boards, Committees, and Commissions: Chair Bates asked the Select Board to have their respective committees send him their short summaries/notes by Friday evening, January 31st.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Sign Abatement: Terri Lynn Baines presented an abatement to the Select Board for signing. The abatement was for Herring Gut Learning Center in the amount of \$7,344.96 and had been approved at the January 6, 2020 Select Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Quitclaim Deed: Terri Lynn Baines presented a Quitclaim Deed to the Select Board for signing. The Quitclaim Deed was on the property of John Melquist, Jr., 43 Wallston Road.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 8:14 p.m. on a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to go into executive session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA Sec. 405(6)(A) to discuss the Town Manager's Performance Review and salary. The Select Board came out of executive session at 8:40 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION:

A motion was made by Chair Bates, seconded by Hall, from July 1, 2020 to maintain the Town Manager's salary unchanged, and increase his paid vacation by 10 days, to be taken by June 30, 2021 or forfeited. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

At 8:42 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Willey, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary