

## ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

### MEETING MINUTES

October 5, 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: Tim Polky, Terri-Lynn Baines, John Falla, Ken Oelberger, Tom Gorrill, and Dale Pierson.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

#### REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- The Ad hoc Committee for the Fort Point Trail and Site Project was moved from Old Business and taken up under Regular Session
- Meetings by Zoom was added under New Business, Discussion Items
- An Executive Session with the Select Board was added and held after the Regular Board Meeting

- Minutes: The minutes of September 28, 2020, were corrected as follows:

Page 2, third paragraph, line 3, correct the word to grade

Page 3, under Solid Waste & Recycling, paragraph 5, line 1, change to read: The SW&RC was very complimentary...

Page 4, under Drift Inn Beach, paragraph 1, line 4, change to read: ... had been long time summer residents in town...

Page 5, first paragraph, line 7, insert words, of land

Page 5, under MMA, paragraph 1, line 4, add the wording: ...not your back when lifting then...

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Hall, to approve the September 28, 2020, Select Board minutes as corrected. The vote was 5-0. Motion carried.

- Communications: None.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of October 5, 2020, was reviewed and signed. The total expenses were \$94,354.04 and included one week of payroll, a payment for health insurance, a payment for delivery of winter sand, repair of the tennis court, and other regular expenses.

#### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Road Paving. Tim Polky reported that the paving of Rt. 131 will not be finished this year as Hager Enterprises has been shut down. Hager will winterproof the roads by completing all the risers and shut-offs for the water lines, as well as ramping up the catch basins to prevent the snowplow from hitting them, and they will stripe the roads.

Rt. 73 Training Building. They started work on the Fire Department's training building on Rt. 73, ran into a ledge and will need to bring a hoe ram in to break up the ledge.

Steve Jarrett. Jarrett had surgery in Boston on Friday, October 2nd. Polky said that Jarrett was stable, walking some, and was transferred to a regular room.

Chair Bates asked Polky if the town would pay Hager Enterprises for an incomplete project. Polky said the town only paid Hager for the work that was done. In the agreement, Hager quoted the town a price for doing the Glenmere Road, which they did complete. Polky said J.K. Kalloch would be digging up the ramp at the Tenants Harbor landing and Performance Paving would be paving it.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Ad Hoc Committee for the Fort Point Trail & Site Project: Selectperson Hall updated the Select Board on the status of the ad hoc committee meeting. He met with Tim Polky, Tom Gorrill, and John Falla last week via Zoom to develop membership criteria for an ad hoc committee. The group concluded that two Conservation Board members, Oelberger and Gorrill; two Historical Society members, Falla and Pierson; and Administration representatives, Tim Polky and Jerry Hall would sit on the ad hoc committee. Selectperson Hall said there was a question whether the ad hoc committee had proper representation for fundraising if that were to be required, but they felt that could be decided later.

During the meeting, Falla suggested the committee have a charge. Normally, the Select Board dictates the charge but since this plan has been a Conservation Commission driven project from the beginning, it was suggested that the CC members provide a proposed charge for the group. Gorrill drafted one, Oelberger circulated it for comments, and feedback was received. The charge was edited, and the proposed draft was sent to the Select Board today, October 5, 2020.

Oelberger reviewed the Fort Point Trail Ad hoc Committee Charge. The first 3 paragraphs were history and background.

The next paragraph established the group recommendation for the ad hoc committee. The composition of the committee will be a minimum of five members and a maximum of seven with the idea that over time, the makeup of the committee may change as other skill sets might be needed. The committee would consist of at least one CC member, one Historical Society member, one Select Board member, and one member from the Town Office Administration.

The bullet points detailed the committee's charge with an estimated completion goal of October 2022.

Selectperson Hall said there were a series of steps the ad hoc committee would need to work through and be addressed but the idea was to make sure that the Select Board was informed and supported the approach being taken.

Chair Bates said when the proposal was discussed several weeks ago, he thought they all saw this as a "gem of a project." There would be some complications, but it would be an asset for the community; one of a historical nature. The Committee and Select Board discussed when to bring this project before the town. Polky noted that the committee would need to have money before May's town meeting because the engineering study would need to be done first then the plan

formulated so the town could vote on it. Polky said, "The target is critical because, if you remember correctly, we are shooting for the \$120,000 grant for the 2021 year which comes right after our town meeting in May 2021. We are probably going to have a special town meeting if we don't raise the money."

Selectperson Hall said a question came up in the meeting as to whether it was practical to do it quickly and could the project be completed in 2022, or whether it would slip to 2023 because of the sequencing of it? Chair Bates said his feeling was if practical to hold a special town meeting before the end of this year to approve money for the engineering design and the survey.

Selectperson Hall said there was a preference in doing it in two years if they could. But the first step was to better understand the timelines, what the grant periods were, how much money had to be raised, and how quickly, and so on.

Polky thought they should meet with the State again and have the state spell everything out. He understood from their meeting in September that they were willing to put this on as their special project in 2021, but the committee would need to have a plan.

Oelberger asked about the requirements for holding a special town meeting. Polky said everyone would need to be notified and it would need to be advertised and posted for 14 to 15 days because of the nature of the project, and a warrant written. Polky said they could hold an informational meeting if the Committee wanted to.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 for the Select Board to establish a Fort Point Trail ad hoc committee consisting of a minimum of five members and a maximum of seven members which will include at least one member from the Conservation Commission, the St. George Historical Society, the Select Board, and the Town Administration.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey, it was voted 5-0 to appoint the following individuals to the Fort Point Trail ad hoc committee: Ken Oelberger, Tom Gorrill, John Falla, Dale Pierson, Selectperson Jerry Hall, and Town Manager Tim Polky.

- Conservation Commission: Selectperson Willey reported the CC met on Thursday via Zoom. Because she was late, she did not attend the meeting but will forward the meeting minutes to the Select Board members.

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board held the Midcoast Marijuana Company on-site inspection on October 5, 2020, at 5 p.m. Mr. Murdock attempted to answer all the questions, and the on-site was very well attended by members of the public.

OLD BUSINESS: Ad hoc committee for the Fort Point Trail & Site Project was taken up under Regular Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Annual Review of Select Board Policy Manual: The Select Board reviewed pages 1-37 for corrections, changes, and updates. Chair Bates will document the changes and see that the policy manual is updated.

- Property Sales Data and State Valuation: Chair Bates stated when the Select Board reviewed the valuations last year, there was a troubling sign that the average rates of sales to assessed value was falling. He noted if that trend continued, there would be an urgent need for a town-wide re-evaluation because the town would not be taxing everyone equally **for** their real value.

Chair Bates noted that this year's data was much better and that was good news. He said the average sales ratio, looking at different types of homes, whether it was the northern part of town versus the southern part of town or waterfront versus inland property or the more expensive property versus the less expensive property, were all coming out pretty much the same. Effectively, the data (limited as it is) indicated that the taxes were being fairly levied across the different categories which was the way it should be.

Chair Bates said the new data meant the town (from the way the state normalized the data between the different towns) was worth a bit less relative to the other towns in the county. As a result, the town might not pay as much county tax next year; though he recently read the county expected its budget to increase next year.

Selectperson Hall thought the town did not need to bump up the provision for a re-evaluation again like the town did this year. Polky said he would not back off from that because there was no money in that account to speak of and if the Select Board decided five years from now that they needed to do something, there was not enough money in there. Polky said the town did not have half the money to do a re-evaluation right now.

Chair Bates said the re-evaluation was done in 2010 when the Assessor's Agent figured out what the houses were worth. Now in 2020 and it looked like those values were still accurate which was good in some ways but also meant properties had not increased in value.

Selectperson Willey said she spoke with a realtor who said everything was selling above price in St. George. Polky also said prices were going out of sight. Chair Bates said yes, but the data he got from the sales of 2018-2019, stated prices were essentially what they were assessed at nine years earlier. He agreed sales seemed to be going well now but had been flat until recently.

-The Rt. 73 Fire Station Training Building Well: Town Manager Polky said when they bought the property, they knew the well water was bad and planned to do something with the well after they built the building. But last week, when the crew was grubbing the site, they hooked the waterline and pipe going into the well and ripped it up. Polky said the pipe was not more than a foot underground; it was too close to the surface because it was all ledge. Polky felt they should not put the money into fixing that well but have a new one drilled closer to the building. JBI's (Jake Barbour, Inc.) crew said that if he (Polky) could get it drilled, they would dig the trench.

Selectperson Willey asked if they would need a larger system because of the training building. Polky said the water there was not drinkable and water would still be trucked in. Selectperson

Willey asked if the pipes would be placed deep enough so they would not freeze. Polky said yes and hoped they did not have to do any ledge work. They want to get the pipe as deep as they can and put insulation on it. Polky said the drilling company planned to come down on Tuesday. He said there was enough money in the budget under the Fire Department Building Maintenance account to do the work. He was not sure what this project would cost but estimated it to be between \$5000 and \$6000.

On a motion by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, it was voted 5-0 to approve the use of the funds in the Fire Department Building Maintenance account to drill a well and trench the area at the Route 73 Fire Station training building.

- Zoom Meetings: Chair Bates stated he would much rather decide on this before there was an incident from Covid-19 rather than waiting until one occurred. He cited the Knox County Covid-19 rates, noted they were on the rise and said it was a risk that could be avoided by meeting via Zoom. Chair Bates said he reviewed the CDC website and looked at the mortality rates which increased with age. Chair Bates said he understood that meeting by Zoom was inconvenient and not as personal, but he did not want to see a Covid-19 issue arise. Selectperson Willey stated she would meet either way. Polky felt the coronavirus may be around for months, and Sawyer agreed it was not just a seasonal virus.

On a motion by Selectperson Hall, seconded by Sawyer it was voted 5-0 by the Select Board to begin holding their meetings again by Zoom, effective October 19, 2020.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 8:02 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Willey, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to go into executive session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA Sec. 405(6)(E) – consultations with legal counsel. The Select Board came out of executive session at 8:18 p.m.

At 8:19 p.m., on a motion by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Hall, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson  
Select Board Recording Secretary