

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office MEETING MINUTES

November 30, 2020 – 7 p.m.

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Members present were: Richard Bates, Chair; Randy Elwell, Jerry Hall, Wayne Sawyer, and Tammy Willey. Also present: Tim Polky, Terri-Lynn Baines, and Ken Oelberger.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

REGULAR SESSION:

- Adjustments to Agenda: None.

- Minutes: The minutes of November 16, 2020 were corrected as follows:

Page 2, under Harbor Committee, line 3, add: ...details on Alan's bullet points.

Page 2, under Fort Point Trail, lines 3 & 4, change to read: ... process requires a property survey and a PE approved plan. A Request for Proposal (RFP) regarding the survey and this work was sent to four firms. Positive RFP responses were...

Page 2, lines 5 & 6, change to read: ... The committee reviewed the two RFP responses at their...

Page 5, 5th full paragraph, line 2, change to read: Selectperson Hall said he thought we should contact MMA to...

Paragraph 6, line 3, change to read: ... if there is any way to avoid taking possession.

Page 6, paragraph 5, line 2, change to read: Chair Bates said with Tilson proposing to put up a 150-foot...

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Sawyer, to approve the November 16, 2020, Select Board minutes, as corrected. The vote was 5-0. Motion carried.

- Communications: Chair Bates received a letter from Paul Christopherson of Warren, Maine noting that throughout November 2020, Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide would be distributing an issue of the Watchtower magazine locally and nationally. If Select Board members would like a copy of the Watchtower, contact Chair Bates.

- Warrant: The warrant for the week of November 30, 2020, was reviewed. The total expenses were \$60,330.56 and included one week of payroll, a payment of \$2,500 to Aerial Survey and Photo for tax maps, a payment of \$3,135.20 to Southworth-Milton, a payment of \$4,245.00 to Reilly Well Drilling, a payment of \$4,937.00 to Fail Safe for hose and ladder testing, a health insurance payment, and other regular expenses.

Chair Bates asked Polky if the town had an aerial survey and photographs done every year. Polky stated the town's property maps were updated on a yearly basis, and it was an annual expense.

Select Board members will sign the warrant by scanning to email, faxing it in, or going to the town office to sign it.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

10 Cold Storage Road. Polky stated he and Noel Musson had a call with Alan Brigham from EDA and had a meeting with the Harbor Committee's subcommittee (Bill Mroz, David Schmanska, Ryan Cline, Tim Polky and Noel Musson, who reviewed the EDA grant) today to discuss how they will respond to the phone call with Alan Brigham.

Tax Acquired Property. Polky said he had been working on a tax acquired property agreement with the owner and was hopeful they could have the results of the agreement by the end of the week.

Town Office Employee Work Schedules. Chair Bates asked how the change in employee work schedules had been working out. Polky explained that having fewer employees in the office at one time had been a bit trying on staff as only one person was working the front desk and handling most of the incoming customers. He stated that re-opening today was particularly difficult as it was the end of the month and staff had returned from the extended holiday. Chair Bates hoped people could understand the logic of reducing the number of staff in the office at one time even if they had to wait a short while for service. Chair Bates felt it was a prudent move given the current COVID-19 situation. Polky thought most people were accepting of the situation and working with it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Planning Board: Chair Bates reported the Planning Board met on November 24, 2020, at 7 p.m.

- The application to install a wood-supported pier, seasonal ramp, and float on Glenmere Road was accepted as complete. Satisfying the standards of Section 15C and 16D in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, the application was approved.
- The application to build a new concrete slab under the existing building and expand the slab and building at 159 Cline Road was given further consideration; the applicant agreed to reconsider the proposal to limit the non-conformities and return with an alternative.
- The application to install exterior stairs at 47 Main Street, from the side parking lot down to the building, was accepted as complete. Satisfying the requirements of the Site Plan Review Ordinance, the application was approved.
- There was a discussion with the developer of a pre-application proposal to rebuild the structure at 127 River Road.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Approve Changes to Select Board Policy Manual: The Select Board made changes, corrections and, updates from pages 38 to the end of the Policy Manual at the November 9, 2020 meeting. Chair Bates noted the review of the manual had been completed for the year.

A motion was made by Selectperson Elwell, seconded by Willey to accept the changes and updates made to the Select Board Policy Manual on November 9, 2020. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

- Fort Point Trail Update: Ken Oelberger updated the Select Board regarding the status of Fort Point Trail. Oelberger stated that at the ad hoc committee meeting on November 12, 2020, Gartley & Dorsky was selected as the vendor for the design proposal, and that Polky contacted both vendors regarding the decision that was made. Oelberger noted the contract had not yet been awarded but Gartley & Dorsky was the selected bidder.

The ad hoc committee also had a follow-up with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Oelberger stated they received several samples of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the state and would review those at their next meeting. He said Polky had discussions with the state about the right of way, and the town had received a draft limited license for access from the state road to the property.

The BLM also offered MDOT help for the parking area. At their last meeting, Larry Johansson joined the Zoom meeting and was quite helpful in describing what the state could help the committee with and he would follow up with Polky and do a site visit. MDOT may be able to help with a concept design for the parking area which might help reduce the price of the design contract.

For funding, Oelberger said, the good news was they now had \$12,500 committed towards the design effort. Maine Coast Heritage Trust committed \$10,000 and they were going back to see if they might pledge more. The Historical Society received \$2,500 in pledges or cash in hand for this project. Oelberger said he had also spoken to Alvin Chase of the Georges River Land Trust. Chase planned to go to the GRLT Board to see if they could support this project with a donation and the Conservation Commission (CC) was going to look at some funds they had left over from other projects. He said this helped the ad hoc committee look at how they wanted to move forward. He added, if they could raise enough money for the first phase of the project, a special town meeting to request funding might not need to be held.

Oelberger stated the committee was concerned about having to delay the project a year to get information out to the town, get more people on board with the project, and funding commitments. They reviewed the schedule and made some changes but felt they could get the design contract started on February 1, 2021. Oelberger said they looked at the pros and cons for delaying or not delaying it for a year but felt they had made good progress in the funding effort, and the revised schedule for the year 2021 seemed appropriate.

Oelberger stated that part of the Gartley & Dorsky proposal was to do was a wetland delineation survey and it was recommended that the survey be done before it snowed. The committee felt that even if they did not get the grant monies, a wetland delineation survey still needed to be done, regardless and the committee would like to use money from the CC fund. The cost of the Gartley & Dorsky survey is \$1,600. Oelberger said was approximately \$9,000 in the Conservation Commission account and approximately \$1,000 of that amount has been committed.

Selectperson Hall feels it is not possible to build broad community support in time for a special town meeting on December 14, 2020. He believes there is potential to raise a significant amount of the \$20,000 from some of the conservation trusts and townspeople if they have a little bit of time to tell the story, build interest, etc., and the nonprofit organizations can publicize and ask for donations specific to the project.

Selectperson Hall's view is if they can raise the money necessary to do this project in conjunction with chipping away at the cost of the project, i.e., paying for the wetland delineation out of the CC's budget and MDOT's help with the parking issue, that may reduce the Gartley & Dorsky fee. Selectperson Hall feels there is potential within the next two to three months to come up with all the monies that are needed to do this project without asking the town for money.

Selectperson Hall said with the committee having several things aligned, and if the committee thinks they can build sufficient community support to fill in the remaining gaps, he feels they should move forward. He believes the work that Oelberger, Gorrill, and Polky did has filled in several of the pieces rather quickly.

Chair Bates had two questions. "1. The Conservation Commission does not have a 'slush fund.' Although you have quite a lot of money in your budget, that is presumably allocated for other items. If you took \$1,500 out to pay for the wetland delineation, what would not be done that the Conservation Commission previously committed to? 2. There seems like there were two reasons to delay. One was a funding issue but the second was to have time to bring the community, particularly the abutters and neighbors on board with the idea." Chair Bates thought, out of respect to the neighbors and the town, it was as important as getting the money and asked them to address those issues.

Selectperson Hall: That was the problem with having a special town meeting on December 14th. I just felt it was impossible to properly address the communication with abutters and to understand whether we had the support or not. If we are not talking about going forward until February 1, 2021, I think there is time. One of the other things that will come up is that we are proposing to have a public meeting with the abutters on December 12, 2020. "Here's our thinking. Here's what we are looking at doing. What are your concerns? How might we address those?" So, I think the revised timeline gives us the ability to specifically address the concerns on that issue.

Oelberger noted they are planning to hold a public session early in January 2021. Chair Bates said he would not want it to appear that it was a foregone conclusion, and out of respect to everyone, not least the abutters, make sure there was a proper process.

Selectperson Hall: What it does is hold the project work until after we have gone through this process and confirmed that it has reasonable support, and the concerns of the abutters can be properly addressed. That the only expenditure of money proposed is a wetland delineation survey which would need to be done at some point, anyway, as part of any work to improve the trail.

Oelberger noted a lot of the work was done by volunteers, the CC got free steppingstones, and they were trying to conserve where possible. He felt they had adequate funding as part of the remaining money in the account was from a carry-over.

Chair Bates: It comes under the category of trail maintenance and you have an allocation, so it is not that people are going to see that some things haven't been done or won't get done by taking out \$1,600. I think that is what I am hearing?

Oelberger: The maintenance would still get done. We get a lot of free labor.

Chair Bates: Volunteer support is terrific. If there is money in the budget, could this be appropriately assigned to this wetland delineation project?

Selectperson Hall stated that the other part of this issue is very important in that one of the firms said if they cannot get the wetland delineation done quickly enough, the estimated cost will be based on everything being wetland which will produce a higher cost for the project than if it were properly delineated.

Chair Bates asked about the amount of the Gartley & Dorsky bid. Oelberger stated the bid was \$22,350.00.

Chair Bates: Roughly speaking with \$12,500 from maintenance and pledges from the Historical Society and \$1,600 from the CC fund, we are up to \$14,000 so that leaves \$8,000 to be raised to move forward with the rest of the project.

Oelberger: We think we will be able to negotiate Gartley & Dorsky's bid down from the full amount. There are some things we can get help on like parking and some tasks can be deferred to the construction phase of the contract. The state also reduced the requirement on the professional engineering review to just the bridge.

Sawyer: Sounds good but let's try to find that other \$8,000.00.

Selectperson Willey: This \$22,000 is for the planning stage? It is not for anything to do with construction or anything else? Oelberger stated it was one of the items required to be submitted with the proposal for the grant.

Selectperson Willey: So, the engineer's plan of what would happen? Selectperson Hall stated yes.

Selectperson Willey: So, we do not have any estimates yet on what the project would cost if it were to go forward?

Oelberger: We know what we originally thought it was going to cost for the town part of the property. Now we are having to look to see how much that may increase when it gets extended to the state section of the property.

Selectperson Hall said the cost would be roughly \$150,000 to \$175,000, but the way they were looking at it was the state would pay that, and then the responsibility of the town would be in the form of the maintenance agreement.

Chair Bates asked when they would know if the grants were awarded. Oelberger said they would know about one in September 2021 and the other one in November 2021.

Chair Bates: I am glad there will be plenty of time with the meeting with the abutters in December and then further discussions with the public before February 1, 2021. As Tammy expressed, it is still money that we are talking about even it is state money, and I think we need to make sure that the town feels we are being responsible for spending state money. Oelberger said he would be sending a letter notifying all the abutters.

Selectperson Willey: Will the abutters get all the information about cost and all that to get their opinion on the project? Do they think all this money should be spent down there?

Oelberger thought that information would be more appropriate for the follow-up meeting. He said this meeting was to get opinions of what they would like to see and anything the CC should do to minimize the impacts.

Selectperson Elwell: What if one of the abutters does not agree with any (part) of the project?

Selectperson Hall said his opinion came back to why? Richard Paulsen has some legitimate concerns. The boundary is not clear, and people wander all over Paulsen's property. If it were him (Hall), he would not want to see any more traffic down there than there was now. But if people could be steered away from the property boundary and it was marked in some manner to stop the wandering, etc., then in his view, the concerns could be addressed. "If you just don't like the idea period and you are just against it on principle, well that is not as persuasive to me."

Oelberger: There are a lot of things we can do in terms of clearly marking the boundary if that is an issue. We have talked about the area where you get down close to the point where you do not know whose property you are on. Some type of split rail fence that is aesthetically pleasing which delineates the boundary line would help no matter what we went forward with.

Selectperson Hall said one of the things they talked about to reduce the cost was, "Do you need to survey the whole area?" He said there is a subdivision to the north and that was surveyed when it was put in. He said the southern boundary needs to be surveyed in case they need to run the trail a little more to the north to get them away from Paulsen's property.

Chair Bates asked if the list of abutters would include the neighbors on the adjacent lane. Oelberger said yes, they would invite everybody from Spring Lane as well as the abutters.

Chair Bates noted that the Conservation Commission's budget had been well managed, and spending controlled. There were no other questions or discussions.

A motion was made by Selectperson Sawyer, seconded by Elwell to approve spending \$1,600 from the Conservation Commission's budget account for a wetland delineation study. The vote was 5-0. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Other Business: Selectperson Willey asked how the Burn Building on Rt. 73 was coming along. Polky stated he spent about two hours there today inspecting it. "They are on schedule. They have the second floorboards done which is the ceiling of the first floor and the second floor. Hopefully, they will do the next floor which will be the top floor just before Christmas." Polky said there are two burn rooms in the building, one on each floor, and they anticipate the work to be completed by the end of May 2021.

There being no further business to come before the Select Board, at 7:58 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Select Board Recording Secretary