**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**REV. 0**

**Date: November 24, 2020 Time:6:00PM Place: Remote Only,**

**Zoom and You Tube Channel**

Select Board Members Present: Jan Gaudio, Walter Reitz and John Spear

Others: Town Administrator Owen Casas, Library Director Pennie Alley, Ambulance Director Amy Drinkwater, David Elwell, Jill Neagle

Note: A listing as present does not denote attendance for the entire meeting.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Reitz called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

1. **Adjustments to Agenda**

Without objection the following adjustments were made to the agenda:

* Consider item VII, c, and VII, a, after item VI, b.
* Add Acceptance of Donations under New Business

1. **Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda**

There was no public comment for items not on the agenda.

1. **Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approved the minutes of October 27, 2020 labeled as revision 2. Motion passed 3-0.***

1. **Department Heads/ Committee Members-**

* Pennie Alley- Library and Cemetery

Alley reported that:

* She wished to publicly thank Owen Casas for helping her with several tasks that proved a challenge due to Covid 19.
* as exercise class was going to ZOOM only, she wanted to buy a lap top from funds from the book sale as the Library’s existing laptop has no camera. She stated that the cost would be over $200, thus she needed Board approval.

**S*pear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approved the purchase of a lap top from funds raised by the book sale. Motion passed 3-0.***

* The idea of shingling portions of the Little Red Schoolhouse using volunteer labor was still under consideration, but it appeared that nothing would happen in that regard until the springtime. Casas will investigate what are DOL standards as cited by MMA Risk Management’s email of November 12, 2020.

1. **New Business**
   1. **New Hires- Jill Neagle, Ambulance Service Driver**

Drinkwater introduced Jill Neagle and requested that the Board approve her recommendation to hire Neagle as an Ambulance Service Driver. Neagle told the Board a little about herself and why she was interested in working for the Ambulance Service.

**S*pear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approve Drinkwater’s recommendation to hire Jill Neagle as an Ambulance Service Driver. Motion passed 3-0.***

Upon inquiry Drinkwater briefly explained the Ambulance OIC and its financial impact and briefly discussed FEMA reimbursement.

Note: At this point in time item VII, c was taken up out of order followed by item VII, a. See below.

* 1. **Appointment- Consideration of Appointing Catherine Bendheim as Full Member of Planning Board**

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to appoint Catherine Bendheim as regular member of Planning Board with a term ending 2021. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Consideration of Personal Property Tax abatement**

The Assessor’s Agent recommended that GEG Construction be granted a personal property tax abatement in the amount of $422.52 for 2019 and 433.57 for 2020.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to grant GEG Construction a personal property tax abatement in the amount of $422.52 for 2019. Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to grant GEG Construction a personal property tax abatement in the amount of $433.57 for 2018. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Consideration to Purchase Office Equipment at Discount Rate**

When Chelsea Summers resigned in early November, she left behind in the town office some office furniture she had purchased with her own funds and had inquired if the town was interested in purchasing the furniture at the discount rate of $325.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to reimburse Chelsea Summers $325 for office furniture. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Recommitment of Taxes to New Tax Collector, Owen Casas**

It was determined that the amount of taxes to be recommitted to Casas pursuant to Chelsea Summers recent resignation as Tax Collector included the amounts the Board has just abated to GEG Construction in item VI, c above.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to rescind the abatements granted to GEG Construction in item VI, c above Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to r*ecommitment outstanding 2020 real and personal property taxes, in the amount of $386,284.68, to Owen Casas. *Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to grant GEG Construction a personal property tax abatement in the amount of $422.52 for 2019. Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to grant GEG Construction a personal property tax abatement in the amount of $433.57 for 2018. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Consideration of Assessing services**

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to extend the assessing services contract with RJD Appraisal for 2021 at the rate of 585.00 per day and to authorize the Chair to execute the amendment. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Review and Approval of Health Benefits**

Casas reported that at his request, Spear had joined him and MMA Employee Health Trust representative Debbie Bridges in a recent ZOOM meeting to discuss the town’s 2021 employee health insurance renewal. Spear reviewed the highlights of the meeting noting that:

* + the town participates in the MMA Employee Health Trust offering Point of Service Plan C as its employee health insurance plan.
  + under the terms of the town’s personal policy only three employees are eligible for the town’s 80% premium contribution to the health plan.
  + for eligible employees with zero to five years of service the 80% premium contribution is for the employee only, after five years it applies to dependents on the plan.
  + currently only one employee is participating in the health plan.
  + the two other eligible employees are/were receiving cash payments in lieu of the premium contribution under the terms of the town’s personal policy.
  + there would be no premium rate increase for the health plan in 2021.
  + employees are eligible for the MMA vision and dental insurance, but under the terms of the town’s personal policy the employee they are required to pay 100% of the premium.
  + no employee is participating in the vision and dental insurance

Spear suggested that since there would be no rate increase in the health plan premium for 2021, that this might be a good time to consider having the town contribute to some portion of the premium for the dental or vision plans, or both, as that might help the town in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. A lengthy discussion ensued including a review of the financial impact of several different options.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to prepare an amendment to Article X11, i, of the town’s personnel policy regarding employee dental insurance which would have the town pay 80% of the MMA dental plan for eligible employees. meeting. Motion passed 3-0.***

* 1. **Acceptance of Donations**

Richard Waldron and Matinicus Island Planation made donations to the Ambulance Service in the amounts of $200 and $300, respectfully.

***Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to accept two donations to the Ambulance Service in the amounts of $200 and $300. Motion passed 3-0.***

1. **Old Business**
2. **Finalize CEO Workplace Accommodation**

At a previous Board meeting CEO Mo Dube had requested, due to Covid 19 and her personnel medical situation, that she be allowed to work from home and by appointment only. The Board was in general agreement with her request but felt a formal workplace accommodation agreement, which would be reviewed every 90 days, should be drafted and formalized.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approve the workplace accommodation agreement with CEO Mo Dube with a copy to be placed in her personal file. Motion passed 3-0.***

1. **Review and Approval of Informational and Signature Sheet for New Demo Debris Stickers**

The Board reviewed a draft of an informational and signature sheet for new Demo Debris Facility stickers. After discussion Gaudio volunteered to “clean up” the sheet making a few minor edits.

1. **Fiscal Year and Other Special Town Meeting Items- Final determination**

It was again discussed if the special town meeting contemplated for December 8, 2020 concerning the Board’s plan to change the town’s fiscal year to July 1 to June 30, holding the annual town meeting in June, and having taxes due in two equal installments per year, should be foregone due to the surge in Covid 19 cases. It was also noted that no comments had been received in opposition to the plan and that the establishment of a town’s fiscal year and date of its annual town meeting are by law decisions that fall under the auspices of the Board.

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion that the Special Town meeting contemplated and tentatively scheduled for December 8, 2020 not be held. Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion pursuant to Title 30-A MRSA Section 5651, that the Selectboard change the Town of South*** ***Thomaston’s fiscal year to July 1 to June 30 with an 18-month transitional period beginning January 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion stating that it is the current intent of this Selectboard to recommend to the 2021 Annual Town Meeting that property tax bills for the 18-month transitional period, described in the previous motion, be due in two equal installments with the first half being due on October 1, 2021 and second half being due on April 1, 2022 and that thereafter property tax bills be due in two equal installments with the first half being due on October 1 and second half being due on April 1. Motion passed 3-0.***

***Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion stating that it is the current intent of this Selectboard to hold the 2021 Annual Town Meeting at a date to be determined in June of 2021. Motion passed 3-0.***

1. **Streetlight Update**

Casas reported that:

* + the streetlight LED conversion project was nearly complete.
  + he was still trying to get a price for the sand and salt shed light.
  + the lighting at the landing still needs to be sorted out and that he has received feedback that the lighting in that area is not as good as it was.
  + he was meeting with a representative from Real Term next week to conduct a quality control review of the project and to discuss the sand and salt shed and the landing.

1. **Maintenance Priorities**

No action was taken regarding this item.

Spear did state that when he came to the Town Office to investigate Chief Calderwood’s report regarding low water pressure in the Fire Station, he found the basement kitchen door was locked and that concerned him as that is where the water service entrance, pressure tank and other plumbing is located. Gaudio stated that he felt strongly that the door should be left open for air circulation purposes. Casas will look into the situation.

1. **Warrants Review and Approval**

Casas stated there were warrants that needed to be signed.

1. **Schedule Future Meetings**

It was the consensus of the Board that until future notice meeting would be remote only with the possible exception of short one or two item meetings. Meetings have already been scheduled for January 5 and 26, 2021.

1. **Adjourn**

***Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:52 PM. Motion passed 3-0.***