

Town of South Thomaston, Maine
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John Spear

Selectboard Minutes

Date: February 23, 2021, 6:00 PM

Place: Remote Only, Zoom

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

Others: Terri Baines, Pennie Alley, Ryan Minikis, Theo Pratt, Sandy Moore, Sarah, Beverly St. Clair, Catherine Bendheim, Linda Garat, Wes Pratt

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

I. Call to Order

Reitz called the meeting to order at 6:02.

II. Adjustments to Agenda

Under New business, e and f were removed as CEO Mo Dube was unable to attend.

III. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

IV. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Gaudio made a motion to approve the minutes of February 16, 2021

Gaudio withdrew his motion.

Spear moved and Reitz seconded a motion to approve the minutes of February 16, 2021 with the adjustments Spear and Reitz incorporated.

Motion passed 3-0.

V. **Treasurers Report/ Financials**

There was no Treasurers Report or Financials. This is a monthly report and was submitted at the February 16th meeting.

VI. **Department Heads**

No Department Head asked for an agenda item.

VII. **New Business: NV- No Vote, RV- Requires Vote**

a. **Annette Naegel Georges River Land Trust**

Annette Naegel attended the meeting to update the Select board on the Georges River Land Trust's latest acquisition. The land trust purchased David and Lori Cousens property on the Keag River. The property was purchased at the end of 2020. The property is 38 acres on Hopkins Lane, off Westbrook Street. Georges River Land Trust has an agreement with the State to keep the property under conservation and protect the wetlands. There is a small trail on the property that will be updated. Georges River Land Trust is willing to work with the local conservation group. The entire property is in conservation. Naegel will send a copy of the agreement with the state to the Town. Reitz asked about the Bobolink trail. It is located on 131, on the St. George River side. The trail cuts through the grass and takes you to the river. Georges River Land Trust coordinates with Maine Coast Heritage trust across the river. They plan on continuing this coordination Naegel said she can be reached by email if anyone has questions. annette@grlt.org

b. **Theo Pratt - projects and the collaborative work**

Pratt is representing a group that is working to reestablish a conservation commission. The group asked for the Conservation Commission to be recommitted by the Select board in March 2020. Pratt listed the requirements of a Conservation Commission. The group feels it has met the requirements and request they be allowed to form a temporary Conservation Commission until the annual town meeting.

Gaudio thought this had already been done. Last year the Town had to have an abbreviated meeting and deferred some of the more complicated issues to the next town meeting. Reitz agreed. The group should keep doing what they are doing until it can be formalized. There is every intention to put the readoption on the town warrant at the town meeting in June. It is the recommendation of counsel that we take it to the town to be reactivated. Pratt inquired if the intention is to reestablish the Conservation Commission is it appropriate for the group to talk about projects for the future. Spear would not call it a temporary Conservation Commission because that would involve appointments. He also pointed out that just because it comes before the town, it does not necessarily mean it will be approved. Spear thought the Conservation Commission had been told the readoption had been put off until the June town meeting. Pratt is afraid not being called temporary doesn't give them authority with the other area Conservation

Commissions. Gaudio suggested calling them a conservation working group. They can bring items before the board and the board can work with them. Reitz will check with MMA about this. There was a discussion on creating an ad hoc committee and appoint members that will terminate at the town meeting. The next meeting is March 9th. The Board will try and have an answer at that meeting concerning creating an Ad hoc conservation working group.

Sandy Moore, member of the Select board in Thomaston and a member of their Conservation Commission, spoke in support of the Town having a Conservation Commission. She pointed out that being a Conservation Commission gives you an advantage over a working group when it comes to applying for grants. She explained the many different projects the Thomaston Conservation Commission does.

The Select board is sold on the idea, there is just a formality to go through.

c. Review of the 2020 Draft Audit Report

Spear has lots of questions. He has concerns that assigned balances that were to be forwarded were not incorporated. He feels a meeting with the auditor would help the Select board and Town Administrator Baines understand the information better. Reitz and Gaudio agreed. Baines will set up a time with Mindy to review the audit.

d. Warrant articles for the Town Meeting

Known warrant articles:

Junky yard

Land use ordinance

3 articles concerning Gilford Butler School

Conservation Commission

Change the way we vote at Town Meeting to elect Selectboard and School Committee members

Spear asked if we had a draft of the Junky Yard ordinance. Reitz said it is in the original warrant.

Any ordinance needs a hearing.

e. 90-day review of CEO Workplace Accommodation Plan

Spear said 90 days is up. Are we comfortable with continuing until we formalize the plan again?

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a move to table to next meeting.

Motion passed 3-0.

f. CEO complaint resolution

A citizen called to complain to Dube about proposed solar farm on rt 131. The complaint is about the way the DEP notice was done, according to Ryan Miniki, of the Planning Board.

There was a discussion of DEP roles and Planning Board roles.

Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to table until next meeting.

Motion passed 3-0

g. Status of Planning Board Bylaw revision

Ryan Minikis and Catherine Bendheim attended the meeting to discuss the status of the Planning Board bylaw revisions. There are still sections to work on. Executive sessions and site visits. The Planning Board will likely vote at their next meeting to accept the revision. The next meeting is March 18th. Minikis reminded the board that the Planning Board is short two members. Gaudio suggested advertising on the website. Spear suggested it also go out on the list serve.

h. Review of COVID mitigation and restriction plans for the Town at the meeting

Gaudio felt it may be too early to know what the situation will be in June. Reitz said the state of emergency has been extended for another month. South Thomaston number of COVID-19 cases have doubled. Reitz wondered should we be doing anything different. An option is to have the town meeting at the airport hangar again if necessary.

i. Authorize Tax Anticipation Borrowing for 2021

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to authorize the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of taxes up to \$900,000 on an as needed basis from the Town's reserve and trust funds at an interest rate of 1/8th of 1% more than the current holder (Machias Savings Bank) pays on the fund.

Motion passed 3-0

VIII. Old Business

a. Schedule Town Meeting Date

The RSU #13 School referendum is June 8, 2021. Tentative date proposed for the annual town meeting is June 15, 2021.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to tentatively set the annual town meeting for June 15th and asked the Town Administrator to contact the airport to see if the hangar is available.

Spear amended the motion to tentatively set the annual town meeting for June 15th at 7:00 pm. Gaudio seconded.

Motion passed 3-0

b. Skateboard Park Upgrade Proposal

Until deciding what to do with Gilford Butler School the Board is reluctant to do anything with the Skate Park. Another consideration is perhaps moving the skate park to land up by Tennis courts where land can only be used for recreation.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to table this matter indefinitely.

Motion Passed 3-0.

c. Personal Property Tax – small claims court

Montgomery certified mail is unclaimed. Spear has the paperwork ready to fill out to file in small claims court.

d. Real Term Change Order

The arm for the light at the town landing is needed because the current arm will not hold the new LED light. The light on the sand and salt shed were not on the original order for replacement. The town was not charged for the poles that didn't have lights.. Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approve the change order.

Spear asked to have it confirmed that the change order covers the light on the sand and salt shed and the arm at the town landing.

Motion passed 3-0

e. Town Administrator Retirement Account

Baines will look into options.

f. Ambulance Bay Lighting

David Elwell will be meeting with Ed Alley. We don't know if it has happened yet.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to table until next meeting.

Motion passed 3-0.

g. Island Road Action Items Update Andrew Hedrick and Kristin Collins

Collins needs to get letters out to property owners. Spear asked Reitz if he had heard from Collins. He replied Collins is waiting for her real estate partner to proof everything.

h. Efficiency Maine Grant

This Grant may cover converting the lighting in sand and salt shed and fire house to LED lighting. There is a short time to submit the application. Waiting to hear from Ed Alley. Baines will look into the application process.

i. Personnel Policy Review

Spear suggestions:

2 c - add "by the Select Board".

Remove grievance and add appeal.

f. Changed Selectmen to Select Board.

Article 9, Did we intend to take away the day after Thanksgiving. Gaudio said it was an oversight. Change to say the following shall be paid holidays for full time employees.

Spear suggested using the tracking form as history of amendments.

Reitz had a question about removing the section on social media. Spear agreed. It's a tricky issue that the board should look into further and investigate more.

Gaudio thought we could insert it under XVI Policy on Harassment but should talk with MMA.

Spear suggested adding family medical leave.

**IX. Communications:
Ecomaine**

No action was taken on this communication.

X. Department Head Reports

There were no monthly reports. Reports were presented in the first meeting of the month.

XI. Warrants Review and Approval

Reitz and Gaudio will come to the town office and sign the Warrants.

XII. Schedule Future Meetings

Affirm meetings on March 9th and March 23rd. Scheduled meetings for April 13th and April 27th, May 11th and May 25th and June 10th.

XIII. Adjourn

Gaudio moved and Reitz seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:13 pm.

Motion passed 2-0

Minutes approved by Selectboard 3-9-2021