



Town of South Thomaston, Maine
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Selectboard:
Jan Gaudio
Walter Reitz
John Spear

Selectboard Minutes

Date: March 9, 2021, 6:00 PM

Place: Remote Only, Zoom

Selectboard Present: Walter Reitz, John Spear, Jan Gaudio
Others Present: Terri-Lynn Baines, Andrew Stancioff, Dr. Christine Flaherty, Jim McDonald, Dan & Linda Palmer, Pennie Alley, Chief Calderwood, Maureen, Linda Garat, Catherine Bendheim, Sondra Wallace, Beverly St. Clair, Julia O'Brien, Kevin Gordon, Sarah, Robert Sherrell, Cliff Dacso, Lynne Caravan, Theo Pratt, John Koffel, Maureen, Chad Harris

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

REV:1

I. Call to Order

Reitz called the meeting to order at 6:00

II. Adjustments to Agenda

Reitz added Clifford Dacso to the agenda to discuss the 6 Guiding Principles of Midcoast Community Internet Coalition. He had a prior commitment and could not be here at 6:00. When he arrives for the meeting, we will fit him in.

III. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

IV. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes of February 22, 2021, February 23, 2021, February 24, 2021, February 25, 2021, and March 1, 2021.

Gaudio edits

Minutes of February 22nd Top change agenda to minutes

Minutes of February 23rd page two paragraph b the group should keep, doing is missing, Minutes of February 25th page 2 of 4 FD contracted services. WE spend more money on the third due truck.

Fire Pond maintenance Reitz told Chief Calderwood to put it in instead of int.

Fail Safe, upper case. Two places.

John edits,

Minutes of February 23rd Counsel instead of council.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approve the minutes of February 22nd

with Gaudio's and Spear's changes.

Motion passed 3-0

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to approve minutes of March 1, 2021.

Motion passed 3-0

Gaudio moved and Reitz seconded a motion to accept minutes of February 23rd, 24th and 25th as amended.

Motion passed 2-0. Spear abstained.

Department Heads

Chief Calderwood – Grant, Fire Extinguishers at GBS, Stipend

Chief Calderwood said the AFG grant has been submitted.

The Fire extinguishers at Gilford Butler School are expired and need to be replaced. The expired fire extinguishers have been removed from the school. Spear asked for a recommendation on how many were needed. Chief said that eight fire extinguishers are needed. Four upstairs and four downstairs because of the materials inside. Alley said two rooms have books in them and one room has fabric. Alley was told fire extinguishers were not needed because it was an unoccupied building. Spear and Gaudio thought the book sale was a temporary activity. If not, we should update our insurance. Gaudio asked what the activity level was? Was it viable to continue? Alley said Saturday is very busy 9 to 12. She would like to continue the book/fabric sale until the fate of the library is decided at town meeting. Baines will check with MMA insurance as the building is now partially occupied on Saturdays. Spear asked Chief Calderwood what the cost of fire extinguishers would be. Chief replied approximately \$70 a piece.

Brief discussion on the motion. The motion is based on still using the building for the book sale. Gaudio did not think it was the intent to have a permanent sale. Reitz is also hesitant to have people in the building. Spear asked if we should continue this to the next agenda and gather the insurance information.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion to amend his motion to 8 fire extinguishers.

Motion passed 3-0

Alley requested a workshop to discuss what will happen if the library is approved to occupy the Gilford Butler School. Reitz suggested we could do this in April. Alley would also like to discuss the painting of the little red schoolhouse.

Spear suggested we take up whether to continue the book sale at the next meeting. Reitz and Gaudio agreed.

Stipend/wages increase.

Spear had asked for some information and received some information but wanted to know if there was more. Chief Calderwood said the information he had was from the only towns that responded. Reitz had MMA data for fire chiefs. He sent out information comparing towns similar to ours. Reitz does not feel he has enough information to make a complete judgement. Gaudio said, comparing fire and ambulance, I think the ambulance director does not get an hourly rate on top of her stipend. She pays for herself with the revenue she brings in. Gaudio wondered if it was an apples-to-apples comparison. The Chief does not get paid hourly. Reitz is willing to discuss as several of the Chief's colleagues get paid an hourly wage plus stipend. Reitz will sanction an hourly rate when the chief goes on a call. In fact, Reitz thought we had done that. Gaudio said we had, but the stipend was increased instead of receiving the hourly wage. Spear would really like to know more information, maybe from St. George or Cushing. Spear is willing to call around for the information. Calderwood asked if the Deputy Chief's increase would be considered too. Spear asked if the Deputy Chief was paid hourly. He is and then Calderwood explained what duties the Deputy Chief was paid hourly for and what duties he received a stipend for.

Cliff Dacso
Adjustment to the agenda

Midcoast Community Internet Coalition.

Dacso is the Town's representative to the Coalition. The MCIC is asking each Town in the Coalition to ratify these Guiding Principles.

There is no mention of funding and these Guiding Principles are not intended to commit the town in any way other than to agree to these principles.

- *Establish a regional utility district through interlocal agreement as permitted by State law*
- *Build a Fiber to Premises (FTTP) internet network to provide cheaper, faster, and better high-speed internet access.*
- *Ensure that the network is open access, inviting multiple providers to deliver services to residents and businesses which will offer a range of products, pricing options and competition*
- *Establish a minimum symmetrical speed of 100 Mbps for download/upload to be provided by any service provider leasing the utilities dark fiber network with the capability of providing symmetrical 1 Gig for users choosing that option*
- *Provide universal access to all residences and businesses within the geographic region of the utility*
- *Best in class customer support with locally managed and operated offices.*

Dacso is asking the board to support the 6 Guiding Principles.

Reitz asked what happens to Spectrum. Dacso says Spectrum becomes a content provider. Reitz and Dacso discussed fiber. Spear thanked Dacso for representing the Town. Spear said at some point in time the town would have to vote to be part of the Collation.

Spear moved and Gaudio seconded a motion for the Town to endorse the 6 Guiding Principles Dacso has read to us.

Motion passed 3-0.

V. New Business: NV- No Vote, RV- Requires Vote
a. Donation to Ambulance Service

Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to accept the \$100 donation from Ronald and Nathalie Crowley to the Ambulance Service in memory of Ben Meltzer.

Motion passed 3-0

b. Clerk Announcement Regarding Nomination Papers for Selectboard

Papers are available March 8th and need to be turned in to the Town Office on or before April 16th.

Spear asked how many signatures were needed. Baines replied at least 25 but no more than 100. Spear asked if they needed to be registered voters of South Thomaston. Baines replied yes. Spear said the candidate also need to be a resident of South Thomaston.

c. Budget preparation – schedule next round of Department Head Meetings

Spear asked Baines if she was helping Gerry with his budgets. Would you ask him to budget some money to remove sand and salt berms, especially on the Island Road. Potentially some of the sand could be used for fill for tennis parking lot. There was a discussion on a 6 month and a 12-month budget. Reitz asked if we are presenting it as an 18-month budget to the Town. Spear and Gaudio agreed that was the recommendation of the auditor, Mindy Cyr. Gaudio asked if the Board was meeting with department heads before meeting with the Budget Committee. Reitz thought only the CEO and Fire Department budgets needed review. Spear will work with Gerry Grierson on his budgets.

Old Business

d. Ambulance Bay Lighting

Deputy Chief Ewell met with Ed Alley. Alley agrees the ambulance bay needs better lighting. He looked at the rest of the building for upgrading with LED lights for the Efficiency Maine Grant. Ellwell has not heard back from him. Spear will follow up with Alley.

e. Personnel Policy Review

Gaudio made changes recommended from last meeting.

Spear moved and Reitz seconded a motion to approve the personnel policy as produced by Jan Gaudio.

Spear moved and Reitz seconded a motion to amend his motion to make it an effective date of tomorrow.

Spear mentioned the policy needed a history and recommended the tracking

document be the history. All prior histories have been attached. Spear suggested a page could be added saying the tracking history is on file with the town clerk.

*Spear restated; I move that we make the revisions to the personnel policy as presented by Jan Gaudio be effective Mach 10, 2021.
Gaudio seconded.*

Motion passed 3-0

f. Update Regarding LWCF Grant

Spear submitted the revised application before the deadline of March 1st. For the benefit of the residents attending the zoom meeting, Spear gave a brief history of the tennis and basketball courts and the grant process. Spear is hoping for donations. He prepared a letter for soliciting donations that he would like to put on the website and listserve. Leslie Spear is donating \$100, and John Spear is donating \$100. Spear will call local contractors and see if he can get materials donated.

If the grant is not approved the Town will return the donations. The Board had a brief discussion on other projects funded with donations.

g. 90-day review of CEO Workplace Accommodation Plan

Tabled

h. CEO complaint resolution re: solar farm

People had approached CEO Dube. Reitz stated people had misinformation and were leaping to conclusions. This was not a complaint about Dube.

Spear asked if the solar farm had filed an application with the local Planning Board. Reitz did not know. He will check with Dube tomorrow. Spear feels Dube needs to be at the next meeting.

i. Update regarding MMA advice concerning creation of an ad hoc conservation working group

Reitz was going to check. He will follow up tomorrow. Tabled until next meeting.

j. Street light update

There was a brief discussion about the smart control lights. Gaudio suggested putting a short item on the website, letting residents know we do have smart controls and can adjust the brightness and on and off times.

Baines reported the LED light for the sand and salt shed and the arm for the light at the town landing should have been ordered today.

k. Town Administrator Retirement

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

Motion passed 3-0

Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to table item g to the next meeting.

Motion passed 3-0.

Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to table item e to next meeting

Motion passed 3-0

I. Update regarding Haskell's work concerning water pressure issue.

Gaudio revisited with Jack at Haskell's to put in a bypass valve. Steve from Haskell's will come on the 15th of March between 11 and 2. Gaudio will be there while the work is taking place.

m. Update on the audit review

Baines has not heard anything from Mindy Cyr, the auditor. Baines will check and see what Mindy's timeline is.

VIII. Correspondence

John Koffel's Letter

Reitz asked how to respond. Spear asked if he could make some comments. He noted the letter was not dated. The email sent to the board that transmitted the letter was dated February 26, 2021. It was not signed by any of the people. Spear stated when he read it he was confused. The first paragraph states "we support funding necessary road work." but does not say what work that is. Second paragraph seems to imply since the Town has no current plan to address potential flooding issues on several private properties, we should not take action to prevent flooding on a public infrastructure which we are responsible for. Third paragraph. We voted to prohibit ledge removal by blasting and pneumatic hammer. Fourth paragraph says the current design requires the acquisition of private property. Spear said it is his understanding that this is not correct. The engineer has stated that publicly. But even if it does he does not understand why that is an issue. Land acquisition happens often in projects. Fifth paragraph. Spear does not understand comparison to the DOT project in the Keag. The last paragraph asks that the Selectboard suspend design and legal work. The project has been in the planning stages for over two years. It was approved at the June 2020 Town meeting. Spear went through the history of the project. The road needs to be repaired. It is collapsing into the pound. Spear feels like the board has addressed the concerns. The current project takes the minimalist approach the residents asked for. Spear does not feel like the Selectboard needs to act on the request to suspend the project. Gaudio agreed with Spear's points. Gaudio thinks we could provide information to John Koffel to help him understand how the project has been funded. When the Selectboard has a smooth design, we could have another meeting. Gaudio pointed out if there's danger we want people to be able to get off the island and get emergency vehicles on the island.

Reitz explained where the funding is coming from. This passed at town meeting. He feels comparing the Keag DOT project to the Island Road Project is a false equivalency. This project contributed 11 cents to the 2020 tax rate.

John Koffel said he appreciates all the board does. He knows the board works hard. He does not feel this project provides emergency access as discussed. Maps clearly show both sections will be under water after completion of the project. The grant specifically stipulated no property was going to be acquired. Koffel thought that the engineer and lawyer were supposed to be at the meeting. Reitz said they were an action item but were not supposed to be at the meeting. The board previously had voted not to do any geo technical investigation. Spear said the engineer recommended against doing it. Spear said we are not removing any ledge with blasting or pneumatic hammer. Brief discussion of blasting and ledges and engineers. Koffel also made comments about the Keag intersection and the Island Project. Gaudio said the entrance into the Post office is safer than it was. The lighted crosswalks and curbing also improve pedestrian safety. Koffel hopes there will be another meeting on the Island Road Project.

IX. Department Head Reports

Spear asked if the town office had a notebook for reports. Baines replied yes. Reitz said reports used to be posted on the website. Baines asked if the board would like that done. Spear said yes as long as Anna has time. There was a brief discussion on reports being archived.

Assessor

The Board reviewed the Assessor's report.

EMA Director

The Board reviewed the EMA Director's report.

Ambulance

The Board reviewed the Ambulance Director's report

Fire Department

The Board reviewed the Fire Chief's report.

Treasurers Report/ Financials

Baines reported we did borrow money to make the February school payment. There was a brief discussion on borrowing money for the TAN. Spear asked if Baines had put together a cashflow analysis. She has not but will work on it.

Baines reported on the three grants Owen had started. The FEMA Grant, The Fishing for Energy Grant and the Keep Maine Healthy Grant. The Keep Maine Healthy Grant period has passed. The Fishing for Energy and FEMA grants are in progress. Gaudio asked if there were any flyers around town about the Fishing for Energy Grant. Baines did not think so, but she could ask Anna to put something on

the website.

Gaudio mentioned the drive by parade for our Boston Post Cane holder, Edgar Post who turns 100 on March 14.

Baines reminded the Selectboard that they need to be thinking about a dedication and a cover for the annual town report.

X, Warrants Review and Approval

Reitz and Gaudio have signed the warrants.

XI. Schedule Future Meetings

The Board reviewed scheduled meetings. An executive session is scheduled for 8:30 on March 16th. The next regular Selectboard meeting is March 23rd at 6pm. Meetings are scheduled the week of March 29th from 6- 9 with the budget committee. Regular meetings are scheduled for April 13 and 27, May 11th and 25th and June 10th. The Town Meeting will be held June 15th. The Knox County Airport hangar has been requested as a venue for the town meeting. Audio and chairs will also be needed.

Julia Obrien asked to speak. She asked for a schedule for the Island Road Project moving forward. Reitz replied the Board would be having an executive session with town counsel to straighten things out. Because of this the engineers have done no work since December. When there is a schedule, Reitz will make it public.

XII. Adjourn

Gaudio moved and Spear seconded a motion to adjourn.

Motion passed 3-0.

Adjourned at 8:18

Selectboard approved March 23. 2021