



**Town of South Thomaston, Maine**  
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**Selectboard:**  
John Spear  
Jeff Northgraves  
Sue Snow

Selectboard Minutes  
Date August 15, 2023, 6:00 PM at the Municipal Building  
**Items Are Often Taken Out of Order to Accommodate Schedules**

Rev 0

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

**South Thomaston Selectboard Present:** John Spear, Jeff Northgraves, Sue Snow

**Others Present:** Terri-Lynn Baines, Assessor's Agent Kevin McCormick, Pennie Alley, Sondra Wallace, Elaine Poirer, Moira Paddock, Rich Norman, John Koffel, Dorothy Merriwether, Catherine Lerme, Kris Wright

**Via Zoom:** Sheryl Dacso, Ambulance Director Amy Drinkwater, Ryan Conley, Walter Reitz, Michael Elliott, David Elwell, Sandy Weisman

**I. Call to Order**

Northgraves called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Northgraves led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Adjustments to Agenda**

Discussion concerning E911 Crisis

Move Tax Commitment to the beginning of the meeting.

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

There was no public comment.

**V. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (July 18<sup>th</sup>, August 3<sup>rd</sup> and August 9<sup>th</sup> .)**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the minutes of July 18<sup>th</sup>, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, and August 9<sup>th</sup>.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**VI. Old Business**

**a. Discussion of GB Demolition Costs and Plan for Library During Construction**

The Futures Committee report from July of 2019 recommends \$75,000 for the demolition of Gilford Butler. The cost of demolition is most likely higher today. The Committee also recommended the Town pay for the demolition of Gilford Butler by putting money into a reserve account for this purpose.

The Futures Committee report recommended the library should move into Gilford Butler temporarily while money is raised for a new building. The plan was for the library to move back to the Little Red School House while a new building was built. This is not a viable option now. Different options were discussed along with the thought of expanding the mission of the facilities committee to consider that factor as we plan for this process.

There was an update on who was appointed to the board of directors of the Non-profit established to fund raise for the new building.

There was a brief discussion on communicating with the public.

**b. Discussion on Phones for Town Office**

Gus Natale was not able to attend the meeting. This will be placed on an agenda in September.

**c. Update on Possible Land Purchases**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion that pursuant to the authority granted to the Selectboard by Article 6, as passed at the 2023 South Thomaston Annual Town meeting, that the Selectboard, in the name of the Town, purchase two parcels of land from Ralph E. Cline III for the sum of \$17,000. Said parcels of land, consisting of 11 acres, more or less, identified on the town's tax map as Map 008 Lot 002 and Map 008 Lot 003 and are more particularly described in a deed from the Estate of Ralph E. Cline, Jr to Ralph E. Cline, III, dated January 31, 2020, found at Book 5522 Page 198. I further move to authorize the Town Treasurer to issue a check in the amount of \$17,000 to the James Strong Trust Account upon delivery of a deed from Cline for said parcels that is satisfactory to Attorney James Strong.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

Smith would like to close three or four days before Sept 10<sup>th</sup>. Wording of the conditions has been sent to Attorney Brannan, Smith's attorney.

The Conservation Commission is working with Land for Maine's Future to apply for a grant and need a little time to work on an abbreviated grant application because of the earlier closing. This is a preliminary process to inform the LMF of the plan for the property and the plan would have to be accepted to move forward.

Spear also spoke with Doug Beck concerning a tennis grant.

**VII. New Business**

**a. E-911 Crisis**

In the near future Knox County Dispatch will not have enough dispatchers to dispatch. 2 dispatchers, 24/7 are needed for 911 calls. The County will be down to 3 dispatchers. An 18 % pay increase was proposed but the union voted it down. Waldo County will handle 911 for now. Dispatch is looking for Firefighters, EMS and police officers to fill in. Non critical calls may be delayed.

There was a brief discussion that this was not communicated to Knox County Towns earlier. The crisis has been building for quite some time but came to a head a few weeks ago. Recruiting and a back up plan with Waldo has been in the works for a bit.

There was a discussion that it is critical, and everyone needs to get on the same page to fix this issue. Drinkwater will keep the Selectboard updated. If she is not able to attend a meeting concerning this issue, David Elwell or Ryan Colson will attend the meeting.

**b. Review Draft Audit for 12 Month Period Ending July 30, 2023.**

The Selectboard reviewed the audit.

Spear reviewed answers from Mindy for the questions he had asked her.

The Selectboard discussed the surplus.

**b. Tax Commitment for 12 Month Period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.**

McCormick presented options A through G.

There was a brief discussion on the State Revenue Sharing projection.

The options with high overlays were discarded.

McCormick reviewed the overlay, factoring and the need for a town reval.

The Selectboard and McCormick continued to discuss factoring.  
Factoring allowed us to certify at 100%, allowing for 100% exemption amounts.  
There was a discussion that the mil rate will be lower, but the valuation increased by 15%,  
This will result in slightly higher tax bills.  
The Selectboard discussed a mil rate of 14.88 or 14.90 and the overlay.

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to set the mil rate at 14.90 for fiscal year 2024.*

Surplus and State Revenue Sharing was discussed. The 14.90 mil rate is less than a 7% increase.

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**c. Request From the Wessaweskeag Historical Society for Funds from the Randall Hopkins Trust Fund**

The Selectboard discussed the town being added as additional insured on the shingling company's insurance. Approval will be based on the town being added as an additional insured.

The Selectboard discussed what the past practices where of disbursing the funds. Before the job is complete or after the Town is presented with an invoice.

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the \$12,400. To forward the deposit amount to the Historical Society and the balance when the job is completed.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**d. Consider Accepting Proposed Ambulance SOP**

The Selectboard accepted the proposed Ambulance SOP.

**e. Discussion on Consent Agreement for 23 School Street**

Michael Elliott and Elaine Poirier, owners of 23 School Street attended the Meeting. Elliot via Zoom and Poirier in person. They also had several friends with them. Poirier presented a letter to the Selectboard.

This agenda item was intended to be an update to the Selectboard on the process and progress of the consent agreement. It was not intended to be a negotiation of the consent agreement.

Northgraves advised Elliott and Poirier any questions need to be taken to the Code Enforcement Officer or the Town Attorney.

**f. Consider Approving Catering Application from Morgan Hill Event Center**

This Catering business has never done business in South Thomaston. The first time, applications need to be approved by the Selectboard.

Mr. Conley was no longer in the zoom meeting. Spear reached out to him by phone. Conley indicated he could not come back to the meeting.

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to table the application.*

Shortly after this Conley re-joined the meeting via zoom.

The Selectboard discussed the application with Mr. Conley. He has been in business for 15 years. He is being hired by the client not the event center.

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the application.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**g. Boiler Bids for Municipal Building Boiler**

There are two bids. Maritime Energy and Harjula Heating. Maritime Energy's bid was for \$44,950 for a Bradford White Brute floor mounted 500k BTU LP boiler (heat only). Harjula Heating's bid was \$46,000 for 3 Viessman B2HE-199 200w propane boilers. The Selectboard discussed the two bids.

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept Harjula's bid with the condition we find out more information about the cost of the installation and a point clarification of the BTU capacity.*

*Spear withdrew his motion.*

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorize Terri to negotiate with Harjula for an amount up to \$46,000 including the installation.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**h. Monthly Reports**

The Selectboard has reviewed the reports.

**VIII. Consider Accepting Donation(s) - Ambulance Donation, Garden Donation**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$30 donation to the Ambulance Service from Alan Post in memory of Barney Elliott.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$50 donation to the Ambulance Service from John and Mary Bird in memory of Barney Elliott.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$25 donation to the Ambulance Service from Madeline and Larry Grierson in memory of Barney Elliott.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$60 donation to the Beautification Project from Lark and Edward Blum.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

*Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$500 donation to the Gilford Butler Community Center from Betsey Lunt.*

**Motion passed 3-0.**

**IX. Correspondence**

Spear asked Baines to send a thank you note to Barry Baudanza on the behalf of the Selectboard thanking him for cleaning up the rotten bait that was left on the town pier.

Northgraves read the press release from MMA regarding the Workers Comp dividend.

Northgraves acknowledged the letters of thank you from Audrey Mackie in appreciation of the scholarships she received from the Randall & Arlene Hopkins Scholarship Fund and the Ralph and Ella Rackliff Scholarship fund.

**X. Warrants Review and Approval**

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the warrants.

**XI. Schedule Future Meetings**

September 12<sup>th</sup> and September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

Tentative special meeting 4:00pm on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**XII. Adjourn**

Without objection the Selectboard adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85124699920?pwd=TTlxMzVTTjBOSUFtNytRS2pSMjBUZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 2469 9920

Passcode: 864584

Selectboard approved September 12, 2023