



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

Selectboard Minutes

Date September 12, 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, Gus Natale, Jerry Harjula, Fire Chief Elwell, Maureen Spencer, Denise Rzeznikiewicz, Pennie Alley

Via Zoom: Leif Anderson

I. Call to Order

Northgraves called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Northgraves led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Adjustments to Agenda

The Library/Community Center Director asked to add donations to the library to the agenda. Discussion on an email received from Paul DiMaggio was also added.

IV. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

V. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (August 15th and August 31st.)

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the minutes of August 15th and August 31st.

Motion passed 3-0.

VI. Old Business

a. Discussion on Phones for Town Office

Gus explained two different options for phone systems for the Town. An on premise phone system and a cloud based hosted phone service. Gus recommended the cloud based service. There was a good back and forth discussion between the Selectboard and Gus on VOIP phone systems. Also discussed were costs compared to what the town currently pays, installation costs, the number of lines/phone numbers needed and what would happen if the internet goes out.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion that we accept the VOIP with the cloud option based on the proposal dated 9-12-23.

This will also include the fax device and library that is not on the proposal.

Motion passed 3-0.

b. Update on Possible Land Purchases

The Smith properties did not close last week. The closing is now proposed to take place on September the 14th at 10:30.

Inland Fisheries and Wildlife says they have everything needed for now to perhaps get reimbursement for some of the purchase, even though it would be a reach back. IF & W also suggested a couple of other small funding options.

c. Update on the Municipal Boiler Replacement

The Selectboard reviewed Harjula's proposal. Harjula was available to answer questions. Harjula will get the room up to fire code. The estimate includes patching the ceiling. The Fuel company will need to remove the fuel. It also needs to be confirmed that the lp tank we have is adequate for the heating demand on it.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept Jerry Harjula's proposal pending verification the tank can handle it.

Motion passed 3-0.

VII. New Business

a. Consider Catering Application from Salvage BBQ- Leif Anderson

This is catering for a wedding reception where alcohol will be served. This is the first time Salvage BBQ has applied for a catering permit in South Thomaston, first time applications are approved by the Selectboard. Anderson has been running the program at Salvage BBQ for the last two years. Salvage BBQ caters approximately twenty or thirty weddings a year. They are catering the food and providing the alcohol.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the catering application for Salvage BBQ for a wedding to be held at the Salt Water Fields Venue for a wedding event on September 16th from 4 pm to 10 pm..

Motion passed 3-0.

b. Discussion with Fire Chief Elwell Regarding Selling of the Two Fire Trucks That Will be Replaced

Fire Chief Elwell and the Selectboard discussed selling the trucks that are being replaced. The Chief is looking for guidance. The Selectboard discussed having a public process to sell the trucks.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to leave the sale at the discretion of the Fire Chief as long as there is a public process.

The Tank truck is due in March of 2024. The Rescue truck is due in May of 2024.

Motion passed 3-0.

c. Discussion with Fire Chief Elwell Regarding using Fire Pond Maintenance Reserve Funds.

The Iron Tree Subdivision has two fire ponds. Over the years the ponds have filled with silt. A contractor that lives in the development is willing to do the work to dredge the pond, cut bushes and place the dry hydrants. The Association has asked if the Town can purchase the fittings for the dry hydrants and the Association will take care of everything else.

The Fire Department is in the process of applying for a grant for working on fire ponds. This is a matching grant. The Chief is hoping to use the grant to purchase the dry hydrants for Iron Tree, plus use it to work on other fire ponds in town. It will cost approximately \$3000 for both hydrants in Iron Tree, and replacing the fittings on the pond behind the town office.

Briefly discussed was the Selectboard's right to release the funds without town meeting since the fire pond maintenance fund is a dedicated fund.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve release of up to up to \$5000 from the fire pond maintenance fund for the purposes described tonight by the Fire Chief.

Motion passed 3-0.

d. Discussion on Expanding the Library Community Center Facility Committee's Mission

Spear drafted a note to send to the Library Community Center Facility Committee.

Spear read the letter he drafted.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorize the Chair to send the letter to the Library Community Center Facility Committee.

Motion passed 3-0.

e. Paul DiMaggio's email

DiMaggio's email is asking the committee to do something that is not their mission. Their mission is not to look into renovations. It is distracting and frustrating to the committee for people to keep asking them to look into renovations.

The Selectboard discussed whether they should reach out to DiMaggio to let him know that it is not the committee's mission.

His email also was trying to explain to them how difficult it is to raise money for a small town.

Briefly discussed was the committee's mission and if/when renovations should be discussed.

The Selectboard members agreed to respond to DiMaggio as a Board. Northgraves will email a response to DiMaggio.

Unless there is a Town Meeting with an article on the warrant regarding renovations, renovations are not an option.

f. Request from Library/Community Center Director to Discuss Investigating the Possibility of Use of Lower Level at the GB Center

Alley stated there is interest in exploring what needs to be done to use the lower level. She has people that would be willing to put money into the lower level so it could be used, whether permanent or not. Alley said being able to use the lower level would allow use of the kitchen, allow room for an indoor recreational space during winter. There could be an area for the pool table and foose ball table. It would also allow more opportunities for other programs.

Alley is requesting she be allowed to go to the Fire Marshal to see what would need to be done in order to be allowed to use the lower level.

There was a discussion on concerns if the downstairs was used. The concerns include the need for an elevator, enclosing the stairs, there is no other exits in case of a fire, ADA compliancy and worry this could jeopardize the permit we have upstairs. In order to approach the Fire Marshal Alley, would need an architect and an engineer for plans.

Brief discussion on private funding.

A member of the public asked if a Modular could be used as a temporary measure.

g. Discussion on the Housing Opportunity Program

Baines explained the opportunity. There is a \$5000 grant available for towns with zoning to be used for expenses associated with municipal ordinance development to comply with P.L. 2021 ch 672. There was a discussion on the new rules and how the rules will change our Ordinances.

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

Motion passed 3-0.

h. Discussion on Structure Regarding Road Commissioner Position

The Selectboard briefly discussed the two models of Road Commission in the State of Maine. The Title Road Commissioner is a misnomer. The job is more a Road Commission/facilities coordinator. Spear will draw up a job description of what the job entails.

i. Consider Abatements - Cline Properties M 008 Lots 003 &002, Smith Properties Map 008 Lot 005, Map 013 Lot 006, Map 009 Lot 006

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to abate the taxes on Map 008 Lots 002 & 003 in the amount of \$179.29 and \$98.39. This prorates the taxes and abates the amount the town would owe.

Motion passed 3-0.

The Smith properties have not been closed on yet.

Gayle Gallant requested an abatement request. Her dock was destroyed during a storm, but not removed from the property assessment. M 001 L 026 22 Lobster Cove Road.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to abate 308.43 to Gayle Gallant 22 Lobster Cove Road for a dock that did not exist on April 1st.

Motion passed 3-0.

i. Monthly Reports

The Selectboard reviewed the monthly reports. There was one question on the CEO's report asking if there is an update 23 School Street. Baines replied the Town Attorney would be reaching out to the Elliots.

VIII. Discuss Personnel Issue (Possible Executive Session Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A §405(6)(C))
7:45 8:02

Spear moved snow seconded a motion to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A §405(6)(C))

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:45.

The Selectboard exited executive session at 8:02.

No action was taken.

IX Consider Accepting Donation(s) Ambulance & Fire Department

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$200 donation to the Ambulance and a \$200 donation to the Fire Department from Vance and Sari Bunker.

Motion passed 3-0.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$100 donation to the library from Kate Alex.

Motion passed 3-0.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$100 donation to the library from Ellen Jorgensen.

Motion passed 3-0.

X. Correspondence

The Local Health Officer, Cliff Dacso, sent the Selectboard a letter reporting on the well water screening event. 100 samples, approximately 20% of homes in town, were sent to A & L laboratories. The lab provided a 25% discount to South Thomaston residents. Dacso will develop a similar project in the fall for Radon.

XI. Warrants Review and Approval

The Selectboard approved the Warrants.

XII. Schedule Future Meetings

September 26

Oct 10 and 24, 10th tentative 11th if the 10th doesn't work.

XIII. Adjourn

Without objection the meeting is adjourned at 8:03

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 851 2469 9920

Passcode: 864584

Selectboard approved September 26, 2023