



Town of South Thomaston, Maine
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Selectmen:
Jeffrey Northgraves
John Spear
Sue Snow

Selectboard Minutes

Date: May 29, 2024, **5:00 PM** at the Municipal Building
(The Public Hearing will begin at 6:00 pm)

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: Jeff Northgraves, Sue Snow, John Spear

Others Present: Terri-Lynn Baines, John Snow, Walter Reitz, Moira Paddock, Richard Rackliff, Cindi Ginn, Pennie Alley, Denise Rzeznikiewicz, Sandy Weisman, Anne Norman, Rich Norman, Barbara Reitz, Lynn Tootill, Ed Modell, Merle Rockwell, John Koffel, John McCrea, Dory Streett, Pat Dougherty, Richard Corazzini, Sally Merchant

Via zoom: Steve Betts, Catherine Lerne, Erv Curtis, Maureen Spencer, Sheryl Dacso, Cliff Dacso, Laurie McReel, Linda Garat, George Sheehan

I. Call to Order

Northgraves called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

II. Possible Executive Session Pursuant to M.R.S.A §405(6)(E)

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to M.R.S.A §405(6)(E).

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard entered executive session at 5:05 pm.

The Selectboard exited executive session at 5:56 pm.

III. Call to Order

Northgraves called the public hearing to order at 6:01.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

Northgraves led the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Public Hearing

a. Proposed Amendments to the Land Use and Shoreland Ordinances

Northgraves gave an overview of the proposed changes, explaining the difference between an accessory building and an additional building.

After the informational hearing held in March, The Planning Board and Ordinance Review committee decided not to have short-term rentals register with the Town. The Planning Board and the Ordinance Review Committee are recommending owners voluntarily let the town know they have a short-term rental.

Other amendments to the Land Use Ordinance are things the CEO writes permits for but were not included in the land use ordinance. Demolition and swimming pools were added. Permitting fences was removed. Tourist homes was removed from the Table of Land Uses.

Regulations regarding non-conforming lots were added to the Land Use Ordinance to be consistent with the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

Commercial use is allowed in the V2 area but can't be greater than 10,000 square feet. The Planning Board will identify, when the Board grants the permit, what the 10,000 square feet covers.

There are currently no requirements for off-street parking. The proposed amendments will require two parking spots for one unit and an additional dwelling unit would require one parking spot more. Accessory dwellings do not require an additional parking spot.

There was a discussion on how these amendments will help affordable housing.

Septics and wells were also discussed. Owners would still have to meet the state requirement for septic systems and prove they have potable water.

There was a question if a camper could be considered a dwelling unit. A camper could be if it's hooked up to a septic system and water.

There were also questions about why the accessory units don't have a parking requirement. This is one of the state regulations for accessory units. No parking spot required.

There was a short discussion on regulating short term rentals and also how can the town stop people from buying up houses, tearing them down and building McMansions.

There is a concern that it's hard for workers in the area to find a place to live.

It was also pointed out that the subdivision laws will apply to having three dwellings on one lot. This would mean subdivision approval from the Planning Board.

Northgraves closed the public hearing at 6:38 pm.

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VI. Adjustments to Agenda

Under new business

Discussion on the Fire Department Purchasing software.

Consider Sondra Wallace's draft letters regarding the Forrest Preserve.
Discussion on distribution of materials at Town Meeting.
Discussion on the mowers request to be paid at the beginning of the month before mowing.
Consider request from Town Administrator to close the Town Office at 4:30 on June 18th to prepare for Town Meeting and June 27th to close out the year.
Authorization for The Road Commissioner to apply for a grant.
Update on Town Float.

VII. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (May 14th)

VIII. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

IX. Old Business

a. Update Regarding Cleanup of Maine Coast Seafood Property

The Selectboard met with the Town Attorney in executive session to discuss the Maine Coast Seafood property. Attorney Collins will issue a Notice of Violation giving the property owners 10 days to take some very specific actions. If nothing happens the town will file a Notice of Violation with the court.

b. Update from the Library & Community Center Auxiliary

President Spear turned it over to Barbara Reitz and Sandy Weisman. Reitz reported that last month the Auxiliary applied for a grant for the proposed new library, the application is moving forward and will be funded through Chellie Pingree's office. On June 11th the Auxiliary should find out how much of their request will be funded. The Auxiliary continues to look for grants and donations.

The Auxiliary is confident they can raise the money for the new library/community center building without local taxes.

X. New Business

a. Consider Citizens Petition Regarding the Gilford Butler Building

There was a discussion on the interpretation of the proposed warrant article. Does change course mean throw away the work that has already been done or does it mean preserve the Gilford Butler building?

There were concerns this article could jeopardize the grants for the new library.

Also discussed was, is the article legal and which meeting warrant should it be on? The annual town meeting, or a special town meeting in the future.

It was proposed the Selectboard put on a competing article.

Northgraves read the citizen's petition article out loud. "To see if the Town will direct the Town Officials to change course from the current goal of demolition and replacement of the Gilford Butler Building and to preserve the existing Gilford Butler Building for future Town use."

The course right now is to plan, and fund raise to build a new library/community center building. If the citizen petition article passes, what is it telling the Selectboard to do? There was a lengthy discussion on if this passes what does this mean.

Spear read the Selectboard's competing article. "To see if the Town will vote to reaffirm its previous June 15, 2021 vote, pursuant to the recommendation of the Gilford Butler Futures Committee, to fundraise and plan for the construction of a modern energy efficient library and community center, with a large meeting room, at the site of the former Gilford Butler School."

There was a discussion on waiting to put it on a later Town Meeting Warrant.

Having the citizen's petition for an article may or may not affect the grant, but if awarded, the money could not be used for a renovation.

The Selectboard feels it is a legal article. The Selectboard discussed the differences between an open meeting and a Referendum. A Referendum does not allow a discussion, so it would be best to have the article on a warrant at an open meeting. The Annual Town Meeting is the best option. Special Town meetings are not always well attended. The Selectboard agreed to put the citizen's petition article on the June 18th Annual Town meeting warrant.

The Selectboard agreed to put a competing article on the Town Meeting Warrant.

There was a lengthy discussion on a new building versus renovations.

b. Sign 2024 Town Meeting Warrant

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to execute Town Meeting Warrant labeled number three with swapping the order of article 26 and 27.

Motion passed 3-0.

c. Consider the Request to Use the Hopkins Fund of \$5,550.00 For the Historical Society.

The Historical Society has an 1857 map they would like to restore. The work will be done by A Place of Restoration in Andover Mass. The total cost of restoration is \$5,500. A deposit of \$1850 is required to begin work. The balance in the Hopkins Historical Society Fund is \$40,277.62

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the expenditure of \$5,500 from the Historical Society fund pursuant to the Historical Society request.

Motion passed 3-0.

d. Consider Request to put Historical Society Drop Off Box at Gilford Butler Center

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the drop off box at the Gilford Butler Center.

Motion passed 3-0.

e. Certify the Draft Land Use Ordinance

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to certify the proposed amended Land Use Ordinance.

Motion passed 3-0.

f. Certify the Draft Shore Land Zoning Ordinance

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to certify the proposed amended Shore Land Zoning Ordinance.

Motion passed 3-0.

g. Certify the Draft ATV Ordinance

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to certify the proposed ATV Ordinance.

Motion passed 3-0.

h. Consider Sondra Wallace's Draft Letters Regarding the Forest Preserve

If the grant applied for through Maine Lands & Future is approved, the Town will be reimbursed the entire purchase price of the properties purchased last year (currently known as the Forest Preserve).

The proposed letter is to ask people that have already donated towards the purchase, if they would allow the donated funds to be repurposed to be used for the land for other things that would be done.

A few minor changes were suggested.

Spear move and Snow seconded a motion to authorize sending out the letter with the two minor corrections.

Motion passed 3-0.

i. Discussion on the Fire Department Purchasing software

The fire department would like to purchase a new software program called Station Smarts. Cliff Dacso presented the proposal to the Selectboard. The cost is \$2,800. There is no money for the purchase in the current budget. There is money in the LHO account and Dacso requested the money be used to purchase the software.

There will be an annual fee in future budgets.

The company has 24/7 support, and the fire department has been assigned a tech officer.

The software can prep payroll for the town office and will also keep an inventory of all the equipment the fire department has. The software will provide information on the property to the fire department when a call comes in.

The Selectboard asked if the Fire Chief was on board with the software and he is.

The LHO (Local Health Officer) fund is money that Dacso would have gotten in stipend but has donated back to the town.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the proposal as presented for the fire department software.

Motion passed 3-0.

j. Float Update

The whole deck has been redecked and the undercarriage that holds the ramp in place has been replaced. An arm underneath was patched, when the float was lifted up a hole was discovered. The hole will be patched and then Spear will scheduled a date with J.K. Kalloch to put it overboard.

k. Road Commission Grant Request.

The Road Commissioner would like permission from the Selectboard to apply for a grant for Infrastructure Protection that has a 5% match. The grant is for design and construction purposes. The Road Commissioner can think of 3 projects that could be eligible. One is down by McLoons, another by Hooydonks where Village Road is eroded by the guardrail and a culvert on Waterman's Beach Road that has flooded several times.

There was a brief discussion on what MDOT is responsible for with the Spruce Head Bridge. Are they responsible for the bridge and the approaches or just the bridge? So far, DOT has repaired the damage as a result of the winter storms on the areas approaching the bridge. Spear would like to talk to DOT about beefing the area up.

Snow moved and Northgraves seconded a motion to allow Spear to explore

the possibility of grants for the area by McLoons, by the Hooydonks and the Waterman's Beach culvert and possibly the area by the bridge.

Motion passed 3-0.

I. Consider Town Administrator Request to Close Town Office Early June 18 and June 27.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to close the Town Office at 4:30 pm on June 18th to prepare for Town Meeting and to close at 1:00 pm on June 27th to prepare for the end of year close out.

Motion passed 3-0.

m. Discussion on the Mowers Request to be paid at the beginning of the month before mowing.

After a discussion the Selectboard decided to compromise with Calderwood and pay every two weeks.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to pay the mower every two weeks.

Motion passed 3-0.

There was a discussion on mowing cemetery

n. Handouts at Town Meeting

There was a discussion at a previous meeting on not having handouts at the annual town meeting. It was remembered that the outside committees definitely were not able to have handouts.

Sandy Weisman had asked if the town office could print double sided color copies for handout at the town meeting. There was a discussion if the Library & Community Center Committee was allowed to have handouts, would the Gilford Butler Center folks, be allowed to have handouts too.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to not allow handouts at the Annual Town Meeting with the exception of the Warrant, Town Reports, volunteer sign up sheets, and copies of the proposed Ordinances.

Motion passed 3-0.

XI. Monthly Reports

The Selectboard reviewed the Ambulance report.

XII. Donations

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept the generous \$500 donation to the Ambulance Service from Ruth Rinklin and to send her a thank you note.

Motion passed 3-0.

Spear moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept the \$100 donation to the Ambulance Service from Lisa Shields and to send her a thank you note.

Motion passed 3-0.

XIII. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

XIV. Warrants Review and Approval

The Selectboard approved the warrants.

XV. Review Items for Next Agenda

Alley would like to discuss Town Meeting Preparation for the Librarian.

XVI. Schedule Future Meetings

June 5th. – if needed.

Town Meeting June 11th and 18th.

June 25th regular Selectboard meeting.

XVII. Adjourn

Without objection the Selectboard adjourned at 8:42

Approved by Selectboard on June 27, 2024

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82719605891?pwd=S0RuM01CYkxANk9YOVpGUUg3ZUF3QT09>

Meeting ID: 827 1960 5891

Passcode: 122598