

Peter Vogell
(Zoom)

GBM


(Zoom)

Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 20, 2021, 4:00 PM
Emerson Hall

Present: Gordon MacArthur, Chair; Colin Powell and Peter Vogell (Zoom), Selectboard; Shawn Blodgett, Town Manager and Karen Motycka, Finance Officer.

Public: Brooke Tenney, Marc Pelletier, Bruce Boczkiewicz, Alyssa Boczkiewicz, Ryan Graves, Bobby Vagt, Ruth Ann Vagt, David Avery for Castine Patriot, Liz parish (Zoom) and Helen Miller (Zoom).

Gordon called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. It was verified that a quorum was present. By roll call.

Gordon asked for a motion to grant a real estate tax abatement in the amount of \$1,640.91. He explained this was the property on Battle Avenue that the Town purchased in September. Colin made the motion for abatement. Gordon seconded the motion. No questions or discussion. Rollcall vote – Gordon voted yes, Peter voted yes and Colin voted yes.

Approved 3-0.

Gordon made a motion to approve a General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$67,357.69. Colin seconded the motion. No questions or discussion. Rollcall vote – Gordon voted Yes, Peter voted Yes and Colin voted Yes.

Approved 3-0.

Gordon made a motion to approve a Water Warrant in the amount of \$2,864.12. Colin seconded the motion. No questions or discussion. Rollcall vote – Gordon voted Yes, Peter voted Yes and Colin voted Yes.

Approved 3-0.

Gordon asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the December 6, 2021 meeting. Colin made the motion. Peter seconded the motion. No discussion. Rollcall vote – Gordon voted Yes, Peter voted Yes and Colin voted Yes.

Approved 3-0.

Gordon made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 17, 2021 meeting. Colin seconded the motion. No discussion. Rollcall vote – Gordon voted Yes, Peter voted Yes and Colin voted Yes.

Approved 3-0.

Item 1.

Gordon asked Shawn for the Town Managers Report – See attached report to become part of the minutes.

Item 2.

Gordan asked if there was any other business. There was none.

Communications – there were none.

Acknowledged member of the public to address their requests.

Marc Pelletier, Sidewalk Ad Hoc Committee. Based upon his conversation with Shawn, Marc said voluntary sidewalk snow removal seemed to be the route for this year. Marc had drafted a letter to property owners asking for their assistance in sidewalk snow removal, as well as giving other options (copy attached). Gordon asked Marc to read the letter, which he did. Marc was asked if the Sidewalk Committee had approved the letter. Marc stated no, but he had sent to the members. Both Shawn and the Selectboard asked Marc to get estimates for the other options, as had been outlined in the Sidewalk Committee's charge. Marc said he did not feel right about getting estimates. The room was reminded that no money was in this year's budget to pay for sidewalk snow removal. Discussion continued, Helen Miller felt it just needed to be done. Brook Tenney asked about Public Works and skid steer option – most sidewalks are too narrow for skid steer option. Gordon had several questions he wanted clarified before any question went to a Town vote – how frequently they would be shoveled during a storm and how much residual snow or ice could remain on sidewalk after shoveling. Gordon also wanted to know if the Town would be held harmless if a volunteer was injured while volunteering snow removal. Colin reminded Marc that the Sidewalk Committee is an advisory committee to the Selectboard and one of the items charged with was to come up with a recommendation of how to proceed this year. Marc asked how an ordinance could be brought to the Town for a vote. Gordon asked Karen. Karen said the preferred option is for the Sidewalk Committee to work with the Selectboard in coming up with a draft ordinance. The second option is through a citizen's petition, which a citizen would bring an ordinance along with the required number of signatures (10% of the last Gubernatorial Election). The ordinance, before being brought with the signatures should be vetted through legal to make sure all in order.

Past Actions – there were none.

Selectboard Comments – Colin wanted to ensure that everyone knew that he had respect for all volunteers and thanked them for their service. Gordon voiced that as well.

Schedule next meetings. Selectboard – Monday 1/3/22 and Tuesday 1/18/22 (Martin Luther King Holiday on 1/17/22) both at 4 PM. Town Gown Meeting – Tentatively, Wednesday, 1/19/22 at 8 AM (Zoom).

With no other business, Gordon asked for a motion to adjourn. Colin made a motion to adjourn. Gordon seconded the motion. Rollcall vote - Gordon voted Yes, Peter voted Yes and Colin voted Yes.

Approved 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Minutes by Karen Motycka.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: December 20, 2021
Re: Town Manager Report

1. COVID Update. Another reminder that the Emerson Hall tunnel is back for another season. To keep everyone as safe as possible, for quick transactions with town staff, we encourage everyone to utilize the tunnel option. Hancock County remains in the "High" category for transmission along with every other county in the State. Federal CDC recently reported that the Statewide positivity rate is 12.2%. As of December 19th, Maine CDC is reporting a combined antigen and molecular positivity rate of 8.8%. Please continue to stay safe.

2. Castine Fire Rescue Department (CFRD) Updates.

a. On January 26, 2022 at 6:00 PM the town will host Port City Architecture and Neil Courtney for a public engagement to present to the public the objective reasoning and educated opinion used to generate the Fire Department assessment that was completed in the Fall of 2020. This is also an opportunity for the public to ask questions regarding the report.

b. The CFRD has been exceedingly busy over the past few weeks, responding to at least a dozen calls during this period to include a fire where a CFRD member was injured. These responses have come at a time when many of the MMA student volunteers have been unavailable. This has reduced the number of trained first responders while also increasing the average age of the CFRD responding population. Going into the holiday season, the CFRD has, in conjunction with medical providers, developed a list of elderly or infirmed

residents who will receive a wellness check should power go out for an extended period. If there is anyone who would like to volunteer for this very important organization, please reach out to either town hall or go to a CFRD meeting on Tuesday evenings at the fire house. There is a role for you in the CFRD.

c. At the last Selectboard meeting, a concerned resident alleged that a requested document regarding the new fire house was not provided. We are happy to report that this document, like every other document that has been requested, was provided to the requestor in a timely manner by email last June, within days of the request.

3. New Law. On January 1, 2022 a new law requiring fuel gas detectors to be installed will come into effect. The new law is Title 25, Section 2469 and will require at least one approved fuel gas detector be installed in every room containing an appliance fueled by propane, natural gas or liquified petroleum gas. The new law in its entirety will be posted on the Castine Web Page.

4. PLC Malfunction at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Last week, the PLC, which is the control box for the de-watering system at the WWTP became inoperable which takes the entire de-watering system offline. This broken part necessitated shipping the raw sludge to Ellsworth each week, which would have increased the town's cost by between \$1000-\$1500 a week. The inoperable part is no longer produced new and there would have been a considerable delivery delay for a new PLC, which would have lengthened the increased cost timeline. We were able to order a re-built unit, which arrived today. The rebuilt unit comes with a two-year warranty and once the new unit is installed, we will send our current PLC out to be rebuilt which will provide us with an on the shelf replacement should the rebuilt unit go down. Total cost to the town will be roughly \$3000-\$3500 for this unforeseen equipment break.

5. Maine Human Rights Commission Complaint Dismissed. In September of 2020, a formal complaint was filed with the Maine Human Rights Commission alleging that the Town of Castine and specific town employees violated the Human Rights of the owner and employees of Nautilus Island. After multiple legal submissions, a mediation session and an independent investigation by the Commission, the Commission found no reasonable grounds to believe that unlawful discrimination occurred and dismissed the case on December 13th.