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TOWN OF CASTINE
SELECTBOARD, ASSESSORS & OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Monday, July 17, 2023

TIME: 4PM

PLACE: Emerson Hall

PRESENT: Colin Powell, Chair, Gordon MacArthur, Roberta Boczkiewicz, Selectboard members; Shawn Blodgett, Town Manager; Karen Motycka, Finance Officer and Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.

PUBLIC: Scott Vogell, Bobby Vagt, Tom Comiciotto, Gus Basile, Liz Parish, Arnold Berleant, Brooke Tenney, Bernie Higgins (Danny Murphy's Pub), Lisa Simpson Lutz, David Adams, Sarah Stammen, Josh Adam, Zander Parker, Anne Blodgett and David Avery of the Castine Patriot.

Zoom: Bruce Boczkiewicz and Helen Miller.

Colin Powell opened the meeting at 4PM. Colin Powell verified that there was a quorum. Colin asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda: None.

Colin Powell asked for a motion to approve the warrants, abatements, budget vs. actual and trial balance reports, bank reconciliations and excise tax collections; Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$233,870.75. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Roberta pointed out that this warrant covered 54 bills, the largest being \$192,000 for a Sewer Debt Service payment and other items such as Hancock County Dispatch, Comprehensive Plan Services, Sewer Dept maintenance, etc.

With no other discussion, Colin asked for votes:

General Fund Warrant approved 3-0.

Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve the Water Warrant in the amount of \$4,304.51.

Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no discussion, Colin asked for votes:

Water Warrant approved 3-0.

Minutes: Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the July 5, 2023, Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Colin asked for votes:

7/5/23 Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Item 1. Colin Powell introduced approving Renewal Liquor License – Danny Murphy's Pub.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz.

Bernie Higgins, Danny Murphy's Owner was present.

With no discussion, Colin asked for votes:

Danny Murphy's Renewal Liquor License approved 3-0.

Item 2. Colin Powell introduced updates from Board/Committee Chairs or Members present; 1) Merchant's Association and 2) Historic Preservation Committee.

- 1) Lisa Simpson Lutz, Merchant's Association President, addressed and gave updates (report attached).

One item to be aware of is that CMA learned after their budget was drafted and approved in January 2023 that the rent was going to increase....in fact, doubling. There are currently 32 paying members which is the Association's major source of income besides the Town's contribution. More funds may be needed to keep the Visitor Center running.

Concerns:

- More businesses in Town;
- No or limited residences to rent;
- Improve communications with Town Government; work with Town Government to make the community better business friendly

- 2) Brooke Tenney, Member of the Historic Preservation Commission, addressed and gave updates (report attached).

Shawn Blodgett, Town Manager, commented on #5 "How can the Selectboard be helpful going forward?" saying that the Town has been in a hold mold for appointing a Ft George Committee to study what the Town should do about/with Ft George waiting for LD 90 to be approved allocating a dedicated funding stream. It is on our radar. Recently there has been discussion about forming up the Committee now to focus and work on the Historic Property Management Plan while waiting on status of LD 90. Discussion.

Sue Macomber, Town Clerk, said the Selectboard should address #6 "Membership". The Selectboard should appoint the mentioned expired terms and approve to extend them to 9/30/23. Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve an extended term to Deborah Neve and Arthur Layton on the Castine Historic Preservation Commission through 9/30/23. Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no other discussion, Colin asked for votes:

Extended CHPC terms approved 3-0.

Item 3. Colin Powell introduced the Town Manager's Report. Town Manager, Shawn Blodgett read his report (see attached):

#3. Department of Economic & Community Development: Shawn added that he anticipates approximately 20 changes to the Castine Zoning Ordinance, changes in the Sewer Ordinance and drafting/adopting a Rental Ordinance. It's going to be a big task.

Item 4. Other Business as Required = NONE.

Communications: -NONE.

Colin acknowledged the public present: -Scott Vogell urged the Selectboard to visit and research the Town Office registering vehicles for non-residents (residents from different Towns, specifically Town of Penobscot). Our Town Office is getting inundated with work due to an increase in foot traffic from other town residents. Discussion.

Sue Macomber, Town Clerk, explained that there has been an increase in foot traffic due to the limited open for operation hours at the Penobscot Town Office and also, Town's of Blue Hill and Orland recently decided to cease non-resident transactions (other Town transactions).

The Selectboard said they have begun to look into this matter.

-Don Tenney said pertaining to the Town Manager report (#6 Infrastructure & Project Updates) he is not an electrician, but he has LED's at his house that can be dimmed. It's confusing.

Discussion. We think the problem is that it's a non-compatible issue.

-Arnold Berleant asked if Castine was doing any planning for global warming? He said it won't take much of a sea level rise to cut off on-neck area to British Canal.

Roberta said the Comprehensive Planning Committee is addressing and that there is a chapter in the plan dedicated to this topic and other chapters within the plan that touches on it as well.

The Town is looking into prominent areas that would be most affected by sea level rising like the Waterfront, Backshore and British Canal.

Arnold also asked if there were any registries for non-owner occupancies in Castine?

Answer was no. Some communities are establishing fees, creating Ordinances, etc. to help stabilize the rental stock. Discussion.

Colin said Castine has a lot of work to do with several Town Ordinances. A Rental Ordinance is one potential. Arnold said Castine's limited housing stock takes away from those wanting to live here and be a part of our community year-round.

-Bobby Vagt said that at a few meetings ago it was discussed what do we need to do to improve Castine. One of the first items that came up was the playground at Adams School. A committee was formed to work on the issue. Bobby shared and reviewed a report (see attached).

The Committee has worked on many facets:

- The playground slides
- State of the equipment
- What equipment should there be
- Equipment for younger ages

The costs range from \$83,000 - \$116,000. They plan to solicit funds, apply for grants, fundraise, etc. Bobby Vagt, on behalf of the Playground Committee requested support from the Town

Selectboard. Bobby said a monetary contribution from the Town would help with their solicitation for other funds. Bobby said it could be critical. The Selectboard said they would review at their upcoming 7/24 Work Session and address at the next Selectboard Mtg (8/7/23).

PAST ACTIONS: NONE.

Selectboard Comments: Roberta Boczkiewicz said that the couple zoom participants dropped off as they couldn't hear anything. Everyone agreed that the system needed attention.

Upcoming Mtgs:

Monday, 7/24/23 – Work Session at 9AM, if needed.

Monday, 8/7/23 & Monday, 8/21/23 - Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg both at 4PM.

-Karen Motycka, Finance Officer, said there are 3-wks in between regular Selectboard Mtgs, therefore, asked if a quick mtg could be scheduled for Monday, 7/31/23 at 9AM to pay bills and possibly put approving the Tax Commitment on that agenda. Mtg was scheduled.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. Chapter 13 §405(6)A to discuss personnel matter. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Colin asked for votes: Executive Session approved 3-0.

Right before going into Executive Session David Adams said he would like to recognize Jimmy Goodson who just recently moved to Southern Maine on 6/29 with his wife Sue after many years of giving to this Town including being a past Town Manager. He was a special individual. Everyone agreed and wished Jimmy and his family the best with their future endeavors.

Executive Session in: 4:44PM

Executive Session out: 5:30PM.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to leave Executive Session and Adjourn the Mtg. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Colin asked for votes: approved 3-0. Mtg adjourned at 5:30PM.

Minutes by Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.

REPORT TO SELECTMEN
From
CASTINE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION
July 12, 2023

1. What we have been working on:
 - Few applications this year. All were approved.
 - We augmented the application on the town website
 - We created and added a map which shows the properties within the Historic District.
 - We also added two pages explaining the application process and what the CHPC can and cannot approve
2. What opportunities we've identified for grants or other funding: Note: the Maine State HPC deadline is next January. We are familiarizing ourselves with the process and the types of projects typically funded. Possibilities are Ft. George and St. Castin Habitation
3. What upcoming projects are we planning?:
 - Review of the Historic Preservation Ordinance
 - Pamphlet about role of CHPC for RE buyers & residents in the Historic District
 - Investigation and research of how to shield the view of heat pumps
 - Public education about historic preservation
 - Focus on the Comprehensive Plan recommendations
4. What challenges are we experiencing? : Commission members are volunteer non-professionals. In order to comply with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan on dealing with the effects of climate change on historical and archeological sites, we feel that we are not qualified and would benefit by the help of a professional/consultant.
5. How can the Selectmen be helpful going forward? In November, the Selectmen were requested by the Town Manager to appoint a committee to study what the town should do about/with Ft. George. No committee yet exists. This study is beyond the charge of the CHPC. When the committee is created, the CHPC recommends that one commissioner be a member to act as liaison.
6. Our membership: The terms of three existing members of the CHPC have expired - They will stay on until September. We are looking for new members.

Castine Merchants Association Report July 17, 2023

The CMA very much appreciates this invitation to submit an initial report to the town, and we look forward to working more closely with town management and leadership going forward.

The Castine Merchants Association is a membership-based non-profit organization that supports the merchants of Castine. Its role is to encourage and support the success of Castine's businesses and non-profit organizations, and to promote tourism.

Membership

In 2023, CMA has 32 dues paying members, down from 45 dues paying members in 2017. This reflects the shrinking business community in Castine over the past six years.

Board of Directors

In early 2023, the CMA saw board leadership changes and also began to reassess its mission, its structure and its goals. The new board of directors consists of:

President: Lisa Simpson Lutts, Castine Historical Society
Vice President: Johanna Barrett, Compass Rose Books
Secretaries: Troy and Cindy Dickens, Tilth & Timber Farm
Treasurer: Tiffany Martin, Bangor Savings Bank

Meetings

CMA now meets three times per year. January meeting includes approval of our annual budget. May concerns coordinating summer calendars. October meeting includes working on Light Up Castine and holiday events and voting for new officers.

Budget

In 2023, CMA approved its first annual budget, which is attached. Unfortunately, four months after the budget was approved at our January meeting, our rent was unexpectedly doubled. This is a serious concern considering we have a balanced budget with little cash reserve. This is an ongoing concern for CMA, and we are, again, assessing our options.

Committees

CMA has two active committees.

The Marketing Committee chaired by Matt Powell of The Pentagoet Inn plans and executes paid marketing to promote Castine as a tourism destination. This year we have advertised in the following:

Maine Tourism Association annual membership dues
Visit Maine Guide advertisement

Experience Maine Summer Guide advertisement
Facebook and Instagram 5-7 posts per week
Visit Castine e-blast produced quarterly - new
Visit Castine website updated and refreshed

This coming fall, the committee will create a comprehensive marketing plan that includes more paid advertising to strategic tourism markets.

The Town Relations Committee is chaired by Johanna Barrett, Compass Rose Books. This committee seeks to work with the town government and employees to foster better communication between town management and the business community, and to advocate for the needs and priorities of the business community in town planning and decision making.

Visitor Center

CMA rents, pays utilities, and manages the Castine Visitor Center which is open from Memorial Day through Indigenous People's Day. The paid manager is Sherri Whittaker who works part time. The Center is staffed by Sherri and a handful of volunteers who greet over 2,000 visitors per year. Brochures and maps are handed out and advice is given to visitors on what to do, where to eat, shop, and stay. As noted, an ongoing concern of CMA is the cost of renting this space.

Town Events

Organizing town events through the CMA continues to be a challenge. Small businesses and non profit organizations are doing the work of being open, being employers and stewarding their respective priorities. The CMA carefully considers its membership's ability to organize and carry out town-wide events and projects. For instance, this year the CMA was asked to take on the organization of Bastille Day, which we do not have the resources, human or financial, to pull off on short notice.

Light Up Castine

This CMA sponsored event includes decorating town for the holidays and organizing an evening shopping event among the downtown businesses at the start of the season. CMA solicits businesses and individuals to purchase holiday tags to hang from the light poles. We organize volunteers to decorate the light poles and promote the shopping evening along with any other December events by town organizations in a paid ad in the Castine Patriot. Light Up Castine is a small fundraiser to augment the CMA budget, raising just under \$3,000.

July 4th

CMA assists the town by soliciting donations of food and supplies from area merchants. 16 area merchants and non-profits donated items to this event.

Concerns

Concerns for the CMA fall into two broad categories. One is the decrease in viable businesses, whether they are year-round or part-year businesses. Less commercial options obviously affect tourist traffic to Castine, seriously impacts the CMA's ability to participate fully in town-wide events, and impacts our ability to maintain the Visitor's Center. (particularly given the sharp increase in rent.)

The second category of concerns is overall communication between town management and the business community. Creating a business-friendly community supports existing businesses and can attract new ones. Consistent and proactive communication about town infrastructure work, such as construction and road painting activity is vital. Consistent and proactive communication about, and enforcement of, town-wide ordinances, related to parking and buildings themselves, would be very helpful. This category of concerns involves long-term thinking, cooperation and communication.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: July 17, 2023
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Bastille Day Thank You. In what seems like a summertime bi-weekly occurrence, I would like to send a heartfelt Thank You out to everyone that took part in the planning, set up, execution and cleanup for the Bastille Day event. The event seemed to go very well at every turn.

2. Bureau of Parks and Lands – Submerged Lands Preliminary Findings Released. On Thursday, July 13, the town received BPL-Submerged Lands' completed initial review of MMA's application to expand their pier, float systems, dolphin platforms and floating breakwater. Comments were submitted by interested parties to BPL on this application and in accordance with Submerged Lands Rules, when comments are received that are related to public trust considerations or other requirements of the Rules, the Bureau will issue Preliminary Findings and Decision for review by the interested parties. The Preliminary Findings are now subject to a 30-day review period during which any interested party may submit additional evidence to challenge the Bureau's findings. The due date for additional comments is August 12, 2023. Unless the Bureau's conclusions from their preliminary findings and decision are significantly altered, the submerged lands lease will be granted.

3. Department of Economic and Community Development. We have submitted Castine's \$10,000 invoice to the DECD to reimburse the town's for expenses pertaining the P.L. 2021 ch 672, otherwise known as LD 2003.



4. Town 1-ton. I've spoken with the Selectboard about this issue before, but this week, I intend to make the purchase of a new 1-ton truck for public works a priority. For the past three years, we have been spending progressively more money each year keeping this truck running and this piece of equipment is critical to public works operations when they need it. We are well funded for this replacement, even though it will be expensive.

6. Infrastructure and project updates. Another priority this week will be to schedule multiple smaller paving projects around town. I have bids for 10 paving projects, but the priority will be on Water Street repairing the pavement after a sewer hook up stemming from a new home build. I suggest I go through each remaining paving project in detail with the Selectboard next week during the work session.

We continue to make some progress with the Community Resiliency Partnership grant work, though not without some significant hiccups. The lights in this meeting room and the one downstairs are not going to be able to be completed without changes to the scope of work. Due to the lights in both rooms being dimmable with high/low lumen output settings, we will not be able to completely upgrade them without either new wiring (not preferred due to having to run new conduit across the ceiling, or two just retrofit. Retrofitting the lights will give us significant energy savings but will also lower the town's Efficiency Maine incentive. As the overarching aim of this entire project is to utilize grant money to gain greater energy efficiency, and our energy savings will be significant both ways, we will be testing the lights tomorrow to ensure that the retrofit option is viable. If it is, we will again move forward.