

Roberta J Boczkiewicz
(Zoom)
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TOWN OF CASTINE
SELECTBOARD, ASSESSORS & OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Monday, November 20, 2023

TIME: 4PM

PLACE: Emerson Hall

PRESENT: Gordon MacArthur, Chair, Roberta Boczkiewicz (ZOOM), Dan Leader, Selectboard members; Shawn Blodgett, Town Manager; Karen Motycka, Finance Officer and Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.

PUBLIC: Helen Miller, Marty Tenney, Peg & Mac Patterson, Scott Vogell, Charlie Pearce, Jim Bernard, Gus Basile, Marc Pelletier, Hope McNally, Ruth Scheer, Andy Chase, David Adams and David Avery of the Castine Patriot.

Zoom: Bruce Boczkiewicz, Liz Parish, Mary Kneisel, Bobby Vagt, Penny Carlhian, Debbie Rogers, Ann Blodgett and Brooke Tenney.

Gordon MacArthur opened the meeting at 4:00PM and verified that there was a quorum.

Gordon asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda: None.

Gordon MacArthur asked for a motion to approve the warrants, abatements, budget vs. actual and trial balance reports, bank reconciliations and excise tax collections; Dan Leader made motion to approve the General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$49,139.51. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Roberta pointed out that this warrant covered 48 bills, with items such as Election Clerks and Gary Brouillard for lamppost GFCI plug repairs being paid. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes: General Fund Warrant approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the Water Warrant in the amount of \$11,447.80.

Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

Water Warrant approved 3-0.

Minutes: Dan Leader made motion to approve the November 6, 2023, Public Hearing minutes.

Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: 11/6/23 Public Hearing minutes approved 3-0.

Dan Leader made motion to approve the November 6, 2023, Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

11/6/23 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Old Business:

- a) **Maine200:** Gordon gave a brief background. Discussion.
Dan Leader made motion to return funds to donors. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Roberta updated saying it was time to resolve this matter. Returning the funds is the best solution at this time. Helen Miller said that the Hatch family donors are fine with $\frac{3}{4}$ funds going to Trail project and $\frac{1}{4}$ going to Adams School Playground. Gordon said that the Trail project is a great idea, but it is in planning stages with no real definition. This is why Gordon favors returning the funds to donors. There is no clear direction at this time. Dan Leader said he agreed. Returning the funds cleans the issue up. Helen Miller addressed. She said the Golf Club, MCHT & BHHT are all on board with the project. Phase 1 would be to the 7th Hole on the Golf Course, get pedestrians off Windmill Hill and make a clear pathway. Bobby Vagt said he agreed with the rationale from the Selectboard with returning the money. It has been long enough. Roberta pointed out that donors can turn around and donate to the Trail Project, Playground Project or both if they wish. Helen Miller asked what the ramifications would be for returning the funds to donors. Karen Motycka, Finance Officer, said that donors would receive a W-9 form and get a 1099 at the end of the year. Donors can then turn around and donate again to another cause before the end of the year. With no other discussions, Gordon asked for votes: Funds returned to Donors approved 3-0.
- b) **Parking:** Roberta gave update saying there continues to be progress. Next steps are to include an outline giving parameters for a potential Parking Committee.
- c) **Fire Station:** the two Public Engagement information sessions gave good input and questions from the public. An upcoming Selectboard work session to take place with Fire Dept leadership to work on questions from the Public Engagements, info packet, fact sheets and reports to the community. Possible outline = Work Session 11/27 at 9AM; Public Engagement with Fire Dept members, Port City Architect, Geologist, Soil Testing personnel, etc. to be present either 12/12 or 12/14/23. The goal is to have the issue to a vote at a Town Mtg sometime soon.
- d) **Work Session about GSA:** Gordon updated. GSA has problems with finances, and they are trying to remedy. One recent development is the Town of Blue Hill has inquired about purchasing one of the properties GSA owns. Dan Leader said he spoke with a GSA Board member after the Selectboard work session and received a completely different perspective. Roberta suggested reaching out to other local town board members to meet via Zoom or in person. Also, Castine can make another attempt to reach out to

GSA to have them talk to the communities about their issues, to be more transparent. Gordon reminded that GSA is a private school with a Board of Directors. They do not communicate well, and we cannot force cooperation.

New Business:

Item 1. Gordon MacArthur introduced electing a Chair (11/23-11/24).

Dan Leader nominated Gordon MacArthur to be Chair (11/23-11/24). Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

Chair Elected approved 2-0 (Gordon abstained).

Item 2. Gordon MacArthur introduced updates from any Board/Committee Chair or Member present: 1) Planning Board; 2) Library Board of Trustees.

1) Jim Bernard, 1st Alternate member, updated. Jim said that work and permits have drastically increased compared to previous years. 60 permits have been issued in 2023 to date and almost \$8,000,000 in permitting work. LD 2003 bill (PL2021 Chap 672; to increase density and allow accessory dwellings on properties within setbacks) that passed to help increase affordable housing efforts is mandated by the State which means all city/town need to comply, not just ones with Zoning regulations. Castine has reached out to attorneys to assist with this major project. There will be a cost to rewrite Castine's Zoning Ordinance which should be reasonable. The State is giving until July 2024 to get this process done. The Castine Comprehensive Plan project is underway as well. Once the proposed Comp Plan is approved by the State it'll mean possible changes to the Zoning Ordinance. The goal is to have amendments to the Zoning Ordinance on the May 2024 Town Mtg warrant.

Jim ended by saying the Planning Board needs more volunteers. The Board meets twice a month at 7PM and receives tremendous support from the Code Enforcement Officer.

Shawn added that he is waiting to hear back from the Town's attorney firm for cost to do the Zoning Ordinance rewrite and hear back from one more firm to then get approval from Selectboard to start the project. There is a 2-3-week lead time.

2) No Library Board of Trustees present.

Item 3. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving updated Disbursement Warrant Policies.

Karen updated. By statute the Selectboard approves expenses. Disbursement Warrants allows one Selectboard member to be able to approve for State monies to be sent to the State in a timely matter; payroll and educational costs. The policies, going forward, will be updated annually. Dan Leader made motion to approve updated Disbursement Warrant Policies. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

Disbursement Warrant Policies approved 3-0.

Item 4. Gordon MacArthur introduced discussion and approve recommended letter from the Harbor Committee to Maine Maritime Academy with NSMV Training Ship concerns. Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve and sign letter to MMA. Second by Gordon MacArthur. The big focus for the letter and concern is regarding to the shape of the stern of the new NSMV ship and presenting a safety hazard to smaller vessels traveling just downriver from the Town Floats. The Harbor Committee's concern is for a small boat (dinghy) leaving the town floats on an outgoing tide, and losing power, thus drifting under that stern, and being forced downwards into the water. This would be a very dangerous situation. Novice sea kayakers might also get in trouble there. A preventative solution should not be difficult. A floating barrier can be positioned just aft of the ship's stern and would catch or deflect any such drifting boat. The letter requests that a floating barrier be constructed by MMA, and in place at all times when the Training Ship is docked in Castine. The Harbor Committee will gladly work with MMA personnel in planning for this barrier. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Letter to MMA approved 3-0.

Item 5. Gordon MacArthur introduced the Town Manager's Report. Town Manager, Shawn Blodgett read his report (see attached):

#4 Grants: Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve applying for the Ed MacDonald Safety Grant for the Fire Rescue Dept. Second by Dan Leader. Approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve applying for the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) Grant for generator at the Battle Ave Water Treatment Facility. Second by Dan Leader. This grant has a 25% local cost split. Approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve applying for the FEMA Winter Storm Elliot Grant for damage done at the dock during the December 2022 storm. There is planking work still to do. This grant has a 25% local cost split. Approved 3-0.

Shawn added that on Friday, 11/3, 2023, the Town received notice from the Maine National Resource Protection Act agency giving approval for the MMA pier project. This is posted on the Town's website. There are multiple permits/leases for the project we are waiting on.

Item 6. Other Business as Required: None.

Communications: a) wedding request at Fort Madison in August 2024 from Kristen Pratt and Robert Carter, MMA employees who live on Court St. They will have wedding ceremony and reception on Fort Madison premises with all necessary permits needed.

Dan Leader made motion to approve. Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Wedding Request approved 3-0.

Gordon acknowledged the public present: -Marc Pelletier asked if the Water St guardrail could be constructed of Rockefeller/Roosevelt teeth (a rock/boulder concept). Marc said they have it at Acadia National Park. Shawn answered that he had the same thought but when he looked

into it, he was told that the State would not approve that concept. Acadia is Federal property, therefore, different scenario. Shawn also questioned whether there is enough space to properly bury rocks to ensure they do not compound a problem by rolling down the hill if hit.

Marc said that he follows the MMA project and process closely. Marc feels that MMA should have a lighting plan by now and is baffled why they do not share it. He said they would need one when soliciting for bids. Marc recommended the Selectboard put pressure on MMA for their lighting plan. He said we must make sure our Town Dock is not lit up like Gillette Stadium. Shawn said MMA's condition of approval for the local permit is to submit a lighting plan. MMA has to receive multiple permits/lease approvals before they can obtain local approval.

Discussion.

-Helen Miller announcement that her mother, Ann Miller (Castine's oldest living citizen) is turning 103 years of age the next day, 11/7/2023. They have arranged a gathering on the Town Common at 10:45AM to sing Happy Birthday to Ann by community members and Adams School students/faculty. The more the merrier.

PAST ACTIONS: NONE.

Selectboard Comments: Roberta Boczkiewicz said that the State contact list and draft letter regarding LD 791 Fort George is on the Town's website for anyone to use for submitting letters to the Governor or any other State representative. Roberta also thanked Town Office staff; Sue, Karen and Shawn for their patience and assistance during the week of the "window dressing" project in upstairs Emerson Hall.

Gordon MacArthur said that the Town Manager has gathered information for the proposed sidewalk project receiving limited contractors who work with exposed aggregate material, which is the type of material Castine uses. Only one contractor works within our area. We are told that most contractors do not use exposed aggregate material because it deteriorates faster as it allows water to enter the concrete. We may have to request a change of product from the voters in the future.

Upcoming Mtgs:

Monday, 11/27/23 - Work Session at 9AM with Fire Dept members regarding new Fire Station.

Monday, 12/4/23 - Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg at 4PM.

Monday, 12/18/23 - Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg at 4PM.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to adjourn. Second by Dan Leader.

With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: approved 3-0.

Mtg adjourned at 5:09PM. Minutes by Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: November 20, 2023
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Sidewalk. I have multiple calls in with the firm we contracted with to demolish and re-pour the sidewalk from Court to Perkins and tying into the walk coming off of Main. Unclear to me when we can get this work scheduled, but I will let the Board know as soon as I find out.

2. Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and Water Rate Increases. We have filed Castine's intent to join the program allowing municipalities to conduct a 1.5% increase without a full rate case.

3. Guardrails. Shifting gears from sidewalks to guardrails. As the Selectboard is aware, Castine has approximately 612 lineal feet of substandard traffic guard rail on Water Street. The downhill slope of this section of street meets Maine DOT requirements calling for guardrails. Last week, Natalie executed a science project to get a planning number for upgrading the rail system along this section of the road network. Going in, I am assuming that rolled steel railing systems are non-starters for the aesthetic of Castine and only timber or steel backed timber systems will be acceptable. Natalie called every vendor on the State's DOT website, or around 14 different vendors. Thus far, we have heard back from four and we are in the service area for only one. The planning number for the completion of the entire project is just over \$104,000. No decision required at this time, but I'd like the Selectboard to strongly consider



making this fix a 3-4 year project for my replacement and budget monies to bring it to fruition.

4. Grants. Several grant opportunities have come across my screen this past week that for which I think Castine would be very competitive.

-The first and easiest would be to approve the Fire Department's application for another round of the Ed MacDonald safety grant for \$1,200. They intend to utilize this money for a chainsaw safety course.

- FEMA has a grant called the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities or BRIC grant. I'd like to apply for this grant to purchase a generator for the Battle Avenue Water Treatment facility. This grant has a 75% grant / 25% local cost split. We were intending to try to emplace the \$45,000 generator next year using water department money anyway, but I'd like to go for this grant first. I request the Selectboard's permission to apply.

- FEMA Winter Storm Elliot grant. Another 75% / 25% cost share grant providing money in response to the winter storm of December of 2022. I think Castine has roughly \$16,000 in non-recouped costs still outstanding. As a reminder, Castine spent just over \$31,000 in repairing the dock area after the storm and we still have over \$9,000 in planking still to go. We have received a grant for \$15,000 from Maine BPL to help defray some of those costs, but I request the Selectboard's permission to apply for this one as well.

5. Town Dock Ramp. Sticking with the town dock theme. Karen has arranged with the vendor for them to begin production of a new ramp for the town dock. The new version will be two feet longer than the current iteration.

6. Town Manager Search and Community Input. As the Selectboard recently received a request for community input towards the decision on the next town manager, I'll submit the following to be posted on the town website soliciting that input.

- List your top three concerns for the Town of Castine.



- In one to two paragraphs or less, describe the personal and professional qualities that you believe the Selectboard should look for in a new Town Manager that will be most effective in addressing these concerns.

7. Department of Economic and Community Development Money. As the town has now received the \$10,000 to defray the costs of changing our zoning ordinance to comply with P.L. 2021 Ch. 672, I'll be bringing legal contract costs to the Selectboard in the very near future to contract this work out.

8. Once around the town. Public works have been conducting ditch and catch basin maintenance. The Route 166 well building has recently been refurbished and the Spring Street Water Treatment building will be refurbished in the coming weeks.