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

DATE: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 (postponed from Monday, 12/18/23 due to inclement weather)

TIME: 4:00 PM

PLACE: Emerson Hall

PRESENT: Gordon MacArthur, Chair, Roberta Boczkiewicz, Selectboard member (Dan Leader absent from the Mtg); Shawn Blodgett, Town Manager; Karen Motycka, Finance Officer and Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.

PUBLIC: Bobby Vagt, Scott Vogell, Marc Pelletier, Don Tenney, Randy Stearns, Bill Corbett, Bev Bishop, Josh Adam, Jeff Ackermann, Charlie Pearce, and David Avery from the Castine Patriot.

ZOOM: Mary Costigan (Town's Attorney), Andy Hamilton (12/14/23 Mtg Facilitator), Penny Carlhian, Bruce Boczkiewicz and Debbie Rogers.

Gordon MacArthur opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

Gordon verified that there was a quorum with Gordon MacArthur and Roberta present in person. Gordon asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda: None.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the warrants, abatements, budget vs. actual and trial balance reports, bank reconciliations and excise tax collections; General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$66,282.38. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz.

Roberta pointed out that this warrant covered about 100 bills which paid CMP electric bills, Coastal Energy fuel bills, \$10,000 monthly winter roads payment and \$1,000 annual clock maintenance. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes to approve.

General Fund Warrant approved 2-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve Water Warrant in the amount of \$2,067.09.

Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. No discussion.

Gordon asked for votes to approve: Water Warrant approved 2-0.

Old Business: 1) Parking – Roberta said the Selectboard continues to work on parking issues.

New Business:

Item 1. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving for the Library to apply for an Association for Rural & Small Libraries Grant (ARSL).

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

\$5,000 to purchase a smartboard and other technology upgrades. There are no matching funds

required. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes to approve:  
ARSL Grant approved 2-0.

Item 2. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving for the Library to apply for a 2<sup>nd</sup> ARSL Grant. Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve. Second by Gordon MacArthur. \$1,000 to go towards community projects or collection development. There are no matching funds required for this grant as well. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes to approve: Second ARSL Grant approved 2-0.

Minutes: Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the December 4, 2023 Executive Session Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. No discussion. Gordon asked for votes to approve. December 4, 2023 Executive Session Mtg minutes approved 2-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the December 4, 2023 Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. No discussion. Gordon asked for votes to approve: December 4, 2023 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 2-0.

Item 3. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving the FY24 Water Dept Budget as recommended by the Utility Board. Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Gordon said the Utility Board met recently and recommends \$554,037. This is slightly down from last year's budget. Karen Motycka, Finance Officer, said this is not due to a decrease in operating expenses but that the debt service payment is down. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes to approve:  
FY24 Water Dept Budget approved 2-0.

Item 4. Gordon MacArthur introduced the Town Manager's Report: Shawn Blodgett read his report (see attached).  
Shawn added: 1) Emerson Hall just transitioned from Spectrum to Fidium with 300 MPs speed; 2) The Community Resiliency Partnership Grant for solar power was not awarded but will open again in the Fall 2024.

#4 Castine Fire Station: Gordon MacArthur further clarified that a referendum ballot will allow the Town, if approved by the Town voters, to do surface & subsurface testing to see if the Battle Avenue site can be a suitable location to house a new Fire Station.

Item 5. Other Business as Required: None.

Communications: -Email from Brock Muir requesting the Town consider allowing food trucks in Castine. The Selectboard all agreed they would discuss this request at an upcoming Work Session.

-Thank you note from Judith Fraiser, on behalf of the Town Band, for the Town's \$500 allocation.

-Email from Marc Pelletier urging the Selectboard and community members to submit letters to the Governor and other State Representatives regarding LD791 and funding for Fort George. Gordon noted that the Selectboard signed and sent a letter to Governor Mills.

-Letter from Mark Salter outlining his opposition and disappointment of how the 12/14/23 Fire Station Public Informational Mtg was facilitated. Gordon said that comments and a response from the Selectboard is being worked on. That also applies to a letter received from Gil Tenney on the same topic as well.

-Copy of follow up letter from Jeff Ackermann to MDOT requesting the State evaluate speed limit on Windmill Hill in Castine. Selectboard sent a letter to MDOT per Jeff Ackermann request. Jeff was given copy of that letter and its on file in the Town Office.

**Gordon acknowledged the public present:** -Marc Pelletier reiterated that he wrote 13 letters to State Representatives and encourages community members to also do so. He suggested the information for letters go into the paper. Marc was informed that the information is posted on the Town's website.

Marc also asked the Selectboard if there was a reason why they were not reading Mark Salter & Gil Tenney letters regarding 12/14/23 Public Informational Mtg into the record? Gordon said the Selectboard have acknowledged receipt of letters and working on responses. Marc said he felt the 12/14 Mtg was very uneven and was a "performance". He felt that opinions were not based on facts and "facilitator" was bias. He asked how much that "performance" cost and where payment would come from? Shawn answered \$680/hr. was estimate at this time and would it come from \$9,800 in Fire Dept Bldg. budget account line in the budget.

-Josh Adam said he was disappointed in Atty, Andy Hamilton's facilitating the 12/14 Mtg and his obvious bias. Josh feels the Town paid him to advocate for the Battle Avenue site and he did not follow the ground rules that were outlined: 1) questions/concerns would be 2-minutes or less which went way beyond with some; and 2) allow everyone in attendance who wanted to speak before he went onto another question which he frequently did not.

Josh said when voters approved the Battle Avenue land purchase in 2021 it also approved authorizing the Selectboard to decide if it would be a suitable place for a new Fire Station. Gordon said the Selectboard and Town Manager continue to work on these details. This upcoming March warrant article is asking approval from voters to spend funds not budgeted to allow testing and the continued investigation for details needed to determine if Battle Avenue property is a suitable site. Shawn verified that only the Town voters can authorize where a new Fire Station will end up, not the Selectboard on their own.

-Bill Corbett noticed his email communication on 12/14/23 regarding the Fire Station issue was not mentioned. Gordon apologized and said he saw the communication when it came in on 12/14 but forgot to mention it at this mtg. Bill also asked the Selectboard about the Arden swings request, like in Belfast, and if the Selectboard would approve the concept, plan, and

allow two on Town properties; Fort Madison and Backshore Beach. The reason for asking for approval would allow the group to search for funding. Gordon asked if swings would be mounted permanently or portable? Gordon said the swings are a great idea, would be very nice in Castine so he would not want to see them to get vandalized. Bill said the frames would be permanently anchored but bench itself would intend to be portable and stored during the winter months. Roberta said she loved the swing idea but would rather have all three Selectboard members present before approving the request. Gordon agreed. The Selectboard could address again at their next mtg.

-Charlie Pearce asked if there were plans to have the Comprehensive Plan voted on in March? Roberta answered probably not as it likely will not be ready by March. Shawn pointed out that there are also 22 Zoning Ordinance changes that need addressing plus the Fire Station issue. Effort will be made to space out these important items to voters to address and vote on. Discussion on Comp Plan, LD2003, how it effects the Zoning Ordinance, implementation, and other factors.

**PAST ACTIONS:** NONE.

**Selectboard Comments:** NONE.

Upcoming Mtg:

Tuesday, 1/2/24 (due to the New Year's Day Holiday) and Tuesday, 1/16/24 (due to the Martin Luther King Jr Day Holiday) both at 4PM – Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor.

Monday, 1/8/24 at 9AM – Selectboard Work Session if needed.

With no other business, Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to adjourn.

Second by Gordon MacArthur.

Gordon asked for votes to adjourn: Approved 2-0.

Mtg adjourned at 4:36 PM.

Minutes by Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.



## MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard  
From: Shawn Blodgett  
Date: December 19, 2023  
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Town Manager Search Update. Maine Municipal Association has received the Selectboard's feedback on the candidates and the number of applicants to move to the next round. January 3d and 4<sup>th</sup> are the target dates for the first round of interviews. To my knowledge and to date, we have only received input from one member of the community on the personal and professional traits the Selectboard should look for in the next town manager.

2. Emerson Hall a Warming Center. As everyone is aware, power is out throughout town. While town buildings and the much of the community escaped major damage from yesterday's storm, without power there may be some that need a place to go to stay warm. If any Castine resident needs a place to go to get warm and/or some rest, do not hesitate to call the Fire Department at 326-8767 or call town hall at 326-4502. A special thanks is warranted to the Fire Department. They responded to multiple calls yesterday and throughout the night culminating in a patrol around town this morning to check for further damage. As always, the CFRD went above and beyond yesterday.

3. Maintenance Issues Around Town etc. On or around this Thursday, a refurbishment of the Spring Street water treatment building will begin. For the Selectboard's awareness, we are starting a process to restore some of the historical items that are currently stored in the barn at the Lighthouse. I



foresee that none of these individual pieces will cost anywhere close to my purchasing authority to restore, but will keep the Selectboard apprised of this as it progresses. These restoration projects can be paid for through the Lighthouse account and other than installing a sump pump, I foresee no large maintenance projects there for the next year or so.

4. LD 2003 preparation. I have completed my due diligence on the legal costs associated with hiring a firm to write the Castine Zoning Ordinance changes necessary to comply with P.L. 2021 Ch. 672 / LD 2003. I spoke with three firms and will be working with our normal legal representation, Bernstein Shur to make this happen. I expect that the cost for the ZO changes will be beneath the money that the town has already received from DECD for this preparatory work. Expect that these changes will be through the Planning Board to the Selectboard and part of the annual town meeting warrant.

4. Castine Fire Rescue Station No decision is required on this tonight, but in the very near future, I will be asking for the Selectboard's authorization to move toward the goal of a March 05, 2024 secret ballot referendum vote on preliminary site design and further environmental testing on Map 20 Lot 8A – otherwise known as the Battle Avenue site. To make this happen the schedule will be as follows:

- 1) No later than January 02, 2024 the Selectboard must adopt the warrant articles to be voted on by Castine.
- 2) A Public Hearing notice must be posted no later than 7 days prior to the public hearing. Castine will meet this timeline if the Selectboard adopts the public hearing notice at the January 16, 2024 meeting.
- 3) A Public hearing must take place no later than 10 days prior to the vote. Castine can meet this requirement by holding a Public Hearing on February 1, 2024 at 6 PM. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place at Emerson Hall.



4) Absentee and Specimen Ballots will be available by February 2, 2024 to make the timeline to get the ballots out at least 30 days prior to the in person vote.

5) March 05, 2024 – the town conducts a secret ballot referendum vote to appropriate funding for the Preliminary Hydrogeologic Investigation and Baseline Characterization of Groundwater and Soil at Tax Map 20, Lot 8A.

I expect that there will be a bare minimum of five other articles on the warrant for this meeting. I will cover each of these in the near future at Selectboard meetings.