

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

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DATE: Monday, February 5, 2024

TIME: 5PM

PLACE: Emerson Hall

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

PUBLIC: Marc Pelletier, Don Tenney, Tom Comiciotto, Gus Basile, Zander Parker, Scott Vogell, Karen Koos, Matt Powell, Josh Adam, Cam O'Brien, Bruce Boczkiewicz, Bob Beske, Brooke Tenney, Bobby & Ruth Vagt, Marcia Mason, Johanna Barrett, Phil Scott, Kate Noel, Julie Bohan, Bev Bishop, Ann Coyle/Robison, Penny Carlhian, Ray Nualla, and Michael Dickerson of the Castine Patriot.

Zoom: Carmen Montes (MMA Sodexo), Pat Bishop, Mary Kneisel, Kay Hightower, Matthew Pedersen/Terry Kudlak, Deb Hamblen-Wood/Walter Foster, Ina Schonberg, Michelle Robinson, Debbie Rogers, Penny Carlhian, Susan Adam, Brock Muir and Ann Miller.

Gordon MacArthur opened the meeting at 5:00 PM and verified 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; Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$97,854. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Roberta informed this warrant pays eighty-one bills covering \$25,000 in storm damage clean-up at the Town Dock, road salt, after-school art program at the library, and paying first responders, etc. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

General Fund Warrant approved 3-0.

Dan Leader made motion to approve the Water Warrant in the amount of \$13,680.79.

Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

Water Warrant approved 3-0.

Minutes: Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve the January 16, 2024, Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

1/16/24 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the January 19, 2024, Selectboard Executive

Session Mtg minutes. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:
1/19/24 Selectboard Executive Session Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Dan Leader made motion to approve the January 22, 2024, Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

1/22/24 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the January 25, 2024, Selectboard Executive Session Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: 1/25/24 Selectboard Executive Session Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Dan Leader made motion to approve the January 29, 2024, Selectboard Executive Session Mtg minutes. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

1/29/24 Selectboard Executive Session Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Old Business: NONE.

New Business:

Item 1. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving Renewal Liquor License – Sodexo Operations. LLC (MMA.) Carmen Montes was present via Zoom.

No complaints were issued to the Town Office over the past year.

With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Sodexo Renewal Liquor License approved 3-0.

Item 2. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving Annual Innkeepers, Tavernkeepers & Lodging Houses Licenses – Castine Cottages, The Pentagoet Inn & Wine Bar and The Castine Inn.

Dan Leader made motion to approve for Castine Cottages. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz.

With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Innkeepers, Tavernkeepers & Lodging House License – Castine Cottages approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve for The Pentagoet Inn & Wine Bar. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Innkeepers, Tavernkeepers & Lodging House License – The Pentagoet Inn & Wine Bar approved 3-0.

Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve for The Castine Inn. Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Innkeepers, Tavernkeepers & Lodging House License – The Castine Inn approved 3-0.

Item 3. Gordon MacArthur introduced updates from Boards/Committees: a) Harbor Committee – tabled until 2/20/24 Mtg; b) Merchant's Association – Matt Powell gave a brief summary (handout – see attached). An updated Walking Tour Map this year, visitor's center, Light Up Castine event, Dinner of Five Flags fundraiser, marketing, new kiosk sign, challenges, etc. Dan Leader asked if the Selectboard could get a copy of the membership list.

c) School Board – Kate Noel reviewed. It has been an active 7+ weeks at the Adams School. About 2-wks before Christmas a storm left 2ft water in the basement. It had to be mitigated. DEP

was contacted as there was traces of oil from the furnace; school functions and classes were moved to Emerson Hall. The next week was the 3-day power outage and the holiday break. January 2, 2024, soot build up was discovered from the oven into the classrooms. Special thanks to the Fire Dept for working on the issue, Emerson Hall staff for building use and to the Castine Boards/Committee for rearranging schedules or relocating their mtgs. Currently, school classrooms are back in session. An air quality test was done and gave the good to go to back in the building. The kitchen is being painted, fire augmentation is being worked on and two sump pumps installed in the basement. Long-term needs have surfaced over the course of these issues and problems: The basement and building structure is being evaluated by an engineer, some drainage concerns, the roof, and a list of concerns from the Fire Chief. The School Board has been addressing and is working on Budget. Some issues covered by insurance. An anonymous donor donated \$40,000 to go towards recent fixes. School Board feels there needs more coordination between school and Town.

Item 4. Gordon MacArthur introduced discussion regarding Harbor Committee Town Dock Recommendation. Zander, Harbor Committee Chair, gave an update. The Harbor Committee has been meeting frequently and addressing damage done after the two (2) January storms. Debris was removed immediately, and temporary measures put in place. Everything is moving forward with hopes for a reasonable 2024 summer season. The Harbor Committee had started pre-planning before the January storms hit which then got side-tracked to deal with the immediate need and funding from the damage. The Harbor Committee supports and recommends the interim renewal of the Castine Town and Acadia Dock piers and their repair to commence as soon as possible and meet the state and federal relief requirements to mitigate costs to the town and provide a working waterfront for the 2024 boating season.

Godon MacArthur said his understanding is that we have to build the Town Dock as it was before the storms because of permitting and in order to get FEMA funding. Time, materials, supplies, and contractors are also factors. Zander said there is an urgency to secure materials/supplies and a contractor as we are not the only Town that got hit hard. Zander said the Committee will continue to investigate a long-range plan, but this is the immediate need. Dan Leader said it's a difficult situation. We all want to build our Town Dock to withstand another storm. There's a big question that is we build what was there before will it hold up in another storm and we also need to help merchants attract more people and boats. We have to deal with short-term before we can address long-term.

Gordon MacArthur thanked the Harbor Committee and Harbormaster Scott Vogell for coming through to get clean up done and all the work done for lining up costs, materials/supplies, contractors, permitting and FEMA process with a goal to have a Town Dock project this spring/summer season. Zander said many people have been key in making this all come together: Harbor Committee members, Harbormaster, MMA, the Fire Dept, volunteers, etc. The Harbormaster did tremendous work.

Marc Pelletier said he would anticipate that the public bidding would have to be waived because of the immediate situation this is. Scott Vogell, Harbormaster, has a marine contractor ready to go with a good, reasonable price to get the project done.

Gus Basile said he couldn't believe rebuilding will not incorporate changes we need for the future. Gordon said that permitting and funding will not allow at this time. The floats did not get damaged, and all efforts will be made to do the best we can to get the waterfront repaired in time for the upcoming season and use materials to help with the future. Zander said that there are some communities who did build up for sea level rise and those measures also got damaged in the January storms. Harbor Committee is pursuing and investigating all options in respect to the Town Dock and bulkhead.

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

#2 Other Grants: Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve to apply for a Community Building Grant sponsored by T-Mobile for \$50,000 with no local match required. The aim will be to refurbish the Fort George baseball field or funding upgrades to the Town Common. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Apply for Community Building Grant approved 3-0.

Item 6. Other Business as Required: None.

Communications: a) Roberta Boczkiewicz read list of people who have submitted correspondence to the Selectboard (see attached).

b) Gordon MacArthur read letter received from Maine Maritime Academy (MMA) President, Jerry Paul, denying the Town any sale, loan or lease of the Court Street strip of MMA property. The letter states MMA feels they have a need for that piece of property.

Gordon acknowledged the public present: - Josh Adam asked who drafted the March 5th Referendum Warrant? The office staff and Selectboard are all involved and the Selectboard approves the warrant to take to the voters. Josh asked why the MMA letter about Court Street property was mentioned and read at the end of the Feb 1st Public Hearing instead of during or at the beginning. This could have been useful information to discuss. Karen Motycka, Finance Officer reminded that the Feb 1st Public Hearing was held for purposes to discuss the articles to be voted on at the March 5th Election ONLY. The MMA Court Street property did not pertain to that hearing. Gordon added that bottom line is MMA Court Street strip of land is off the table and no longer an option. Josh asked about the part-time CEO position and how will that work. Gordon said if voters approve the funding the position they will consider advertising but the current CEO has agreed to stay on as part-time. Lastly, Josh asked if Savee & Maher firm was paid for Erik Clapp's presentation? The firm was paid for Court Street fire station location testing and was asked to be present at the 12/14/23 Public Informational Mtg and the 2/1/24 Public Hearing. The firm has not been hired to do testing work on the Battle Ave site. We do not know who that will be yet.

-Ann Coyle/Robinson said she had submitted information and requested that a working conflicts, ethics, and misuse of resources policy be adopted. She said do not show anyone as there is confidential information involved. Ann said there is a lack of transparency in this Town. Dan Leader said that prior to him being a Selectboard member there was a different perception and now is learning all the time. He said there is specific rules of how the Selectboard can operate which includes not talking about Town issues with each other outside meetings, etc. Dan said there is complete transparency, and he takes offense to Ann's allegations. There are values setup and rules to live by and from what he sees and has learned thur far that is all being done. Roberta asked Ann if she'd be willing to attend an Executive Session meeting with the Selectboard. She answered yes and took her documents back.

-Gus Basile said speaking of transparency and asked, again, about the meetings between the Fire Dept and Port City Architecture. He said the Fire Officials and the Town Manager knew he wanted to be at all the meetings and was never contacted. It was explained again to Gus that in the beginning Port City met with key Town officials to get the scope of what Castine wanted and needed of their services. That process does not have to be a public meeting. Gus also asked why George Motycka was not invited to the Feb 1st Public Hearing. It would have been nice to have a different perspective and different point of view. Gus felt the Selectboard should have had someone present with opposition to the Battle Ave site for a fire station.

- Marc Pelletier asked about the gazebo structure on the Town Dock and if there were plans to have one again. He suggested that it be a mobile structure so it could be moved for predicted bad storms. This has not been discussed yet but the Selectboard said it was a good idea and would keep it in mind. Dan Leader suggested maybe installing "sails" on Dock like Dennett's had on it outside deck.

PAST ACTIONS: NONE.

Selectboard Comments: NONE.

Upcoming Mtgs:

Wednesday, 2/7/24 – Selectboard Executive Session Mtg at 9AM.

Friday, 2/9/24 – T/G Mtg at 9AM.

Monday, 2/12/24 – Work Session at 9AM, if needed.

Tuesday, 2/20/24 - Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg at 4PM (due to the President's Day Holiday).

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

Second by Dan Leader. Gordon MacArthur asked for votes: approved 3-0.

Mtg adjourned at 6:15PM (Public Information Listening Session on Food Trucks following).

Minutes Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.



Castine Merchants Association

visitcastine@gmail.com

@visitcastine

Castine Merchants Association Notes for Castine Select Board Meeting, February 5

The Castine Merchants Association is pleased to present some notes to our select board on our recent activity, fundraising efforts, and community concerns. Please see the notes below for more:

Updates from the CMA & current projects highlights:

- CMA is more active than in recent years. Our membership is up this year as we are entering a “map year,” attendance & frequency of CMA meetings is up, and cooperative effort between merchants is strong. Total members to date for 2024 is 42.
- Castine Visitors Center saw approximately 3500 visitors in 2023, no change from 2022 despite the unfavorable weather conditions
- Light Up Castine 2023 fundraiser raised \$3000. Taking into account the costs, the fundraiser netted approximately \$2200, decrease from previous years.
- CMA is gearing up for its first annual “Dinner of Five Flags” fundraiser, a prix fixe 5-course meal, exploring the culinary history of our peninsula. This is an exciting collaboration between the CMA, the Pentagöet, and the CHS. It is nearly at its 40p cap. We are hoping the additional fundraiser will help with rising costs of running the VC.

CMA Marketing:

- Castine Town Walking Map is currently being revised for accuracy and reprinted for the 2024 season. Total cost is approx. \$3200.
- Working on a new Castine Visitors Center sign, pending approval of the select board. Total cost is approx. \$800-900.
- Castine social presence is strong.
- We have taken ads out in the following channels: MTA’s Maine Invites You, Bangor Daily’s summer guide, and VisitMaine.com and .net.
- Working on a new member welcome packet

Challenges:

- Rising costs in operating the Visitors Center & rising costs of print/digital advertisement. Rent increase, nearly doubled. Asking select board for an increase of town allocation, from \$12,000 to \$17,000.
- Sudden lack of food options in town due to the winter storms, losing Dennett’s and the seafood shack. We would like to voice our strong support for amending the town ordinance regarding food trucks, and we would like to have a seat at the table for approving new vendors in town.
- Coordinated town marketing & business development efforts.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: February 05, 2024
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Winter Storm's Update.

FEMA asked for updated damage assessment figures and evidentiary documents following their site visit to Castine on the 25th of January. The Water Street embankment damage are not items that can be covered by the FEMA damage assessment. If they had eroded more, and damaged Water Street, they could have been claimed, but as of right now, they can't be. This brought the town's numbers down to just over \$600,000 in reportable damages. However, this figure is not set in stone and can be updated as estimates come in.

Speaking of estimates, we have received the estimate for the Town Dock repair and it will be approximately \$144,000. This repair will be to replace the dock as is, where is with no modifications in square footage or elevation. If the town reconstructs like this, we qualify for a Permit by Rule with the State of Maine DEP. If we alter the design in either square footage or elevation, we will have to go through the Army Corps and National Resource Protection Act permits which will mean months in delays. The Harbor Committee is recommending this step as an interim step to ensure that Castine salvages the 2024 boating season. The sheet piling has been assessed and we expect a report back on this in the next day or two. Another engineering firm is lined up to conduct a peer review to ensure that everything on the town dock remains safe.



Money. We are quite a ways away from seeing FEMA money but we believe that we will look good for recouping our costs on these repairs. Further, on Friday, we applied for \$50,000 from the Maine Department of Transportation's Infrastructure Adaptation Fund for planning and permitting money to reconstruct the dock in a more sea level rise resistant fashion. Lastly, the town still expects to receive \$288,000 from Congressionally Directed Spending for town dock expansion once the Congress passes a budget.

2. Other Grants.

The new Emerson Hall fire escape doors have been produced and are only awaiting weather stripping. Once received and installed, this will close out our Community Resiliency Partnership Grant. For the next round of the CRP, we expect to apply for funding with the focus on solar projects.

There is a Community Building Grant sponsored by T-Mobile for \$50,000 with no local match required. I respectfully request permission to apply for this grant with the aim of either refurbishing the Fort George Baseball Field or funding upgrades to the Town Common. As an offshoot of this grant, I would like to discuss forming a Fort George Committee at the next Selectboard work session.

Our letter of interest will be due by March 15, 2024 for the Northern Border Regional Commission Catalyst grant program. If the Selectboard remembers, this is a grant that we applied for last year for 1.91 million for Western Court Street. Once ready, I will ask the Selectboard for the Board's permission to apply for this grant at the next Selectboard meeting. This grant has a 50% match requirement.

3. Around the Town.

We have ordered a new sign for the Transfer Station. It will be arriving in a week or so. A mockup is provided for the Selectboard's awareness.