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

DATE: Tuesday, February 20, 2024

TIME: 4PM

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, Bob Beske, Brooke Tenney, Bobby & Ruth Vagt, Julia Gray, Bob Friedlander, Jessica & Jake Simmons, David Adams and David Avery of the Castine Patriot.

Zoom: Kay Hightower, Matthew Pedersen/Terry Kudlak, Michelle Robinson, Pat Bishop, Natalie Griffith and Helen Miller.

Gordon MacArthur opened the meeting at 4:00 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 \$59,560.68. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. Roberta informed this warrant pays about fifty-five bills covering road expenses, fire dept supplies, Library and Town website work, 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 \$2,923.78.

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

Water Warrant approved 3-0.

Minutes: Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve the February 5, 2024, Selectboard Mtg minutes. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

2/5/24 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the February 1, 2024, Public Hearing Mtg minutes.

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

2/1/24 Public Hearing Mtg minutes approved 3-0.

Old Business: 1) Roberta said she wanted to clear up confusion regarding Food Trucks. There is no Food Truck Ordinance. Currently, the Town has a “No Vending on Town Properties” Policy and the Land Use section in the Castine Zoning Ordinance which would need to be amended to allow Food Trucks. Shawn further explained. The Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow take out food activity would be under the Land Use Table. If the Policy were to be updated and to allow Food Trucks the Land Use section of the Zoning still needs to be amended. Shawn said he also recommends adopting a stand-alone Food Truck Ordinance. Dan Leader asked if it was realistic and doable to make this happen for the 2024 season in order to have good vendors present or any at all. We need time to advertise, etc. We must stay mindful of the timeframes. 2) Roberta also updated on Parking & the Traffic Ordinance saying the Selectboard continues to address and discuss in Work Sessions but are not ready for any action yet.

New Business:

Item 1. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving annual Innkeepers, Tavernkeepers & Lodging Houses Licenses – The Elms at Castine.

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

With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: The Elms at Castine License approved 3-0.

Item 2. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving appointment to the Recreation Committee.

Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to appoint Ryan Jarvis as alternate member, 1-year term.

Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: REC Committee appointment approved 3-0.

Item 3. Gordon MacArthur introduced updates from Boards/Committees: a) Recreation Committee – Jessica Simmons gave report. The Committee met recently and reviewed their budget request. They are requesting an increase due to: aiming to replace balloons on 4th of July with flags due to safety; member Dan Gardner (MMA Student Services) has some new ideas, i.e., weekly sports family night at the Backshore which would mean purchasing new or updated equipment/supplies. The current inventory is being assessed in the REC closet. REC equipment/supplies can also be “checked out”; another new item is proposal that Castine become a supporting member & community at the YMCA in Blue Hill. Castine is the only peninsula town not participating. The cost is \$1,500 /year. Jess reviewed a few of the membership perks. Dan Leader said building a relationship with the local Y is great. Roberta Boczkiewicz said being able to check out REC equipment/supplies is a benefit feature; b) Harbor Committee – Zander Parker (Chair – arrived late) The contractor doing the Town Dock repair should be arriving by 3/7. They will work on pilings then move over to the Acadia Dock to do repairs needed to buy time for legislature to make a decision on whether to allow sea level rise repairs and set criteria. Materials are being reviewed and will likely finalize order after the

Harbor Committee Work Session this Friday, 2/23. The 2024 Mooring Site, Dock & Launch Fees and Rules Policy will be reviewed at the upcoming Work Session as well. The Harbor Committee/Harbormaster has reviewed its budget request with a few nominal changes and areas that inflation increases hit. The Committee/Harbormaster reviewed and updated where needed Harbormaster duties which can provide support to the Town Manager and so that all can be on the same page. The Committee/Harbormaster is staying informed on the MMA Pier Project and knows that MMA was recently awarded the remaining permits it needed and is reviewing bids. The Committee/Harbormaster has given input to the Comp Plan and is working on a heavy weather outline. Floats are scheduled to go into the water mid-April with hopes to meet this time table with the Town Dock repairs going on. Lastly, the Committee/Harbormaster is investigating the potential and costs for new additional floats to expand the dinghy basin.

This was an item on the Harbor list being worked on before the January storms hit.

Shawn Blodgett added that MMA has received all external permits needed but they have not yet received a Building Use Permit from the Town. Lighting plan is one final step but will not hold up their bid process.

Marc Pelletier asked about the height of the Dock. Shawn said the current plan is to install the pilings as is and trim them if needed. As Zander reported, Acadia Dock work will be done after old pilings are pulled out on the Town Dock side and new pilings put in to buy time for legislature to make a height decision. Marc asked if the Town has written to State representatives to show support for the height increase addressing sea level rise concerns and can the information for the community to write showing support be advertised. Shawn said the Town has written letter of support and, yes, information can be posted on the Town's website.

Gus Basile asked about solar power at the Wastewater Plant in Bucksport. Shawn said he does not know any details and has too much going on in Castine to worry about Bucksport. Gus said he just wondered if there is useful information to help show how much a payoff there is. Shawn said it is difficult to compare communities to Castine. Many communities qualify for more assistance and grants than Castine does. Dan Leader said many items such as, incentives, costs, rate, and constant changes that help determine a true payoff. You typically do not see a payoff for 6-8 years.

Question from someone on Zoom: Who is the contractor for the Town Dock. Shawn answered Islesboro Marine.

Item 4. Gordon MacArthur introduced the Town Manager's Report. Town Manager, Shawn Blodgett read his report (see attached):

#3 Grants Update: Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve to apply for the Northern Border Grant which is due by 3/15/24. Second by Dan Leader. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Apply for Northern Border Grant approved 3-0.

David Avery asked what the Court date on 2/21/24 was about that is resulting the Town Office to be closed. Shawn answered a hearing is scheduled involving two Town employees with several other employees being subpoenaed or going for support.

Marc Pelletier asked about LD2030 and raising Town Dock pilings 14". Wouldn't the ramp on the Town Dock have to be raised as well? Shawn said yes and the railings. The Town is getting estimates for all this work. Cable railing is more attractive but is expensive. There might be some of the old that can be reused. Marc also asked about the Cell tower. Karen Motycka confirmed currently there are two carriers; AT&T and T-mobile. Marc asked how much income to the Town solar power could generate. Shawn answered it depends on land used but is estimated at \$4,000-\$8,000 an acre using 6-8 acres at the Transfer Station. If the Town hires a consultant, we can get better information and numbers than we have right now but it will have to wait until after the 3/5/2024 Election.

Brooke Tenney said she was confused regarding the solar power information given. Shawn said there are many different possible locations; some small projects and the Transfer Station being the big project. Solar power for individual homes is different than the scope of what the Town would need. Solar power could lower Town energy costs. Again, a consultant could answer a lot better.

Item 7. Other Business as Required: Food Sovereignty Ordinance – Castine resident Troy Dickens was present to address. He said a couple years ago the question was brought to Maine voters regarding food sovereignty, which passed. Governor Mills deemed that it to be controlled through local Ordinances. Many communities have done this, so it allows home farm businesses to, for example, produce and sell salsa, etc. directly to the community without having State licenses. Discussion.

Bob Beske brought up how it did not work well in Blue Hill. Troy corrected saying it was because of raw milk and raw meat. It was shut down by the Feds. Troy explained that raw milk and meat are much different categories. Gordon MacArthur thanked Troy and said the Selectboard would review and talk more in upcoming Work Sessions.

Historic Preservation Grant Opportunity – Julia Gray from Wilson Museum was present to address. She said the deadline to apply is March 25, 2024, and she is happy to do the bulk of the work. This grant targets landscaped historic properties. The goal would be to hire a consultant for about \$10,000-\$30,000 to evaluate Castine's historic properties. There is a 25% match which would be split 3-ways (Town, Wilson Museum and Historic Society; \$2,500 each). This would be a planning project and impactful for the Town. Marc Pelletier said that Castine Historic Preservation Commission has a mtg tomorrow (2/21/24) and Julia Gray will be attending that mtg. Marc said he would report back to the Selectboard.

Gordon thanked Julia and said the Selectboard looks forward to continued discussions regarding this grant opportunity.

David Adams said the St. Castin habitation located on the Pemberton property off-neck is the most historic land we have in the State of Maine. Erosion damage needs to be assessed from the recent January storms. David said he has been trying for decades to get erosion fixed and under control at this historic site. He said it is critical and needs to be done.

Communications: a) Matt Powell of CMA informed that CMA put together a survey for Food Trucks in Castine to the CMA membership for input. So far, 75% of the membership was in favor and supported a Food Truck Ordinance. CMA is gathering more information.
b) Roberta read list of February correspondences received to date being worked on (see attached).

Gordon acknowledged the public present: NONE.

PAST ACTIONS: NONE.

Selectboard Comments: Roberta said many people have expressed they are not aware of scheduled Selectboard Work Sessions and agendas. She read a list of items the Selectboard have discussed lately (list attached). Dan Leader said Work Sessions are open to the public and posted. Gordon added that no decisions are made at these Work Sessions.

Upcoming Mtgs:

Thursday, 2/22/24 – Budget Work Session at 1PM.

Monday, 2/26/24 – Work Session at 9AM.

Tuesday, 2/27/24 – Selectboard Executive Session Mtg at 11AM.

Wednesday, 2/28/24 – Budget Work Session at 9AM.

Friday, 3/1/24 – T/G Mtg at 9AM (MMA).

Monday, 3/4/24 and Monday, 3/18/24 – Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtgs both at 4PM.

Karen Motycka reminded everyone the Presidential Primary & Castine Referendum Election is on Tuesday, 3/5/24 with Polls open 8AM – 8PM.

Marc Pelletier said the Town's new text message push notifications is very helpful. He encouraged all to sign up!

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 5:26PM.

Minutes Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: February 20, 2024
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Winter Storm's Update.

Town Dock. We have received a Permit by Rule for the reconstruction of the town dock and pier reconstruction could begin as soon as two weeks from now. However, we are paying very specific attention to emergency legislation (LD 2030) moving through Augusta right now. This LD will allow communities and individuals to build back "as is, where is" and qualify for a PBR, but also elevate their new structure up to a yet to be specified distance. If this bill becomes law, we intend to elevate the town dock by approximately 14 inches to allow for a convenient two step rise of 7 inches each and an ADA compliant ramp.

A new sheet pile steel cap has been ordered from a firm in Brewer. As part of this design, we have asked a firm out of Portland for a quote for four new floats to be built to be positioned (with MMA final approval) in-between the new town dock and the MMA travel lift. This will expand the town dock dinghy basin. The Harbor Committee will meet again on Friday to make a final recommendation on the decking. The original plan was to utilize a product called thru-flow but we are now looking at a product called Wear Decking. This product is very close in price to traditional wooden planking but with no buoyancy.



The running total for the actions we took for immediate damage control is \$26,655. Our current estimate for a new and improved town and acadia docks is \$197,323 for a total of \$223,978.

Left to be completed is to gather bids and schedule work for a litany of projects at the Backshore Recreation Area and further assessment of what will be required for damage abatement of the areas where the shoreline was significantly eroded.

2. Solar Power Update.

Over the past year plus, Roberta and I have been conducting research and looking for external funding sources for various solar projects around town. I believe that we are at a point where we can't take these projects any further without hiring an outside consultant. The principal aim for a solar initiative is putting an array on the capped landfill at the transfer station. There are several different models that can use. One would be to gather interest from developers and the revenue benefit would only come from land lease payments. Another would be where Castine's transfer station would become an anchor subscriber to a Community Solar Project. This may be beneficial as it would still allow for lease payments from the developer, but also defer some of Castine's municipal energy cost. The third option would be where Castine designs, builds and owns the project.

For \$8,500, we can hire a consultant. This figure would be separated into two installments with the first installment being \$4,500. For funding, we can use the legal account closer to the end of the fiscal year, or after March 5, possibly Selectboard contingency. If the Selectboard doesn't like either of those options, I request that we look at putting into next years budget. For this sum, we will receive the following:

3. Grant(s) Update.



- a. Northern Border Regional Commission Grant. As a reminder, this is the grant we applied for last year for western Court Street from Pleasant to Tarratine. Letters of Interest for this grant opportunity are due by March 15. Last year's application cleared the NBRC screening and made it to the final 7 but only 5 applications were picked for funding. I have asked Olver Associates to update the planning numbers which last year were 3.83 million dollars as this grant requires a 50% match. The 50% match is roughly broken down as follows: 1 million from the town, 500 thousand from water and 400 thousand from sewer. In rough numbers, we believe that the town and the Water Department could cover their match, but sewer is still slightly indebted to the town. If the town ends up receiving the Congressionally Directed Spending package for the Sea Street pump station for 1.76 million, the Sewer Department will still have to pay another \$500 thousand on this project. Add in Western Court Street and the sewer department will need to bond roughly 1 million dollars to bring both of these projects to fruition. A debt service payment on \$1 million will equate to roughly \$60,000 a year in payments. The town will retire roughly \$200,000 in sewer debt service in 2027, which means for approximately 2 years, the sewer rates will have to cover both bonds. If Castine were to be picked for funding this year though, the town will be able to fix a large piece of its aged infrastructure for 50 cents on the dollar. I respectfully request the authority to apply for this grant. If the funding strategy should fail, the community can always turn the money down later.
- b. As there are a good number of other grants, I will run through them from the attached spreadsheet.

4. Around the Town.



- a. Assistant Chief Spratt has been working with Maine DOT Region 4 representatives to place either curve warning signs or a painted warning on the pavement on the dangerous curve on the Shore Road where the December 2022 fatal car wreck involving MMA students happened. This same curve has had several similar accidents over the past couple of years.
- b. Castine will receive 2 more pedestrian warning signs from the State of Maine DOT. These signs will replace the two that the town purchased which were quickly destroyed by drivers in town. We will place the new signs off to the side of the road at the top of the hill on either side of Main Street at the Court and Main Street intersection.
- c. The new transfer station sign is up.
- d. 4 of the town's historic signs are in for refurbishment.
- e. Town Hall will be closed tomorrow due to town staff being in court in Ellsworth.

Work Session Topics Febraury

- 1) Discussion of town audit w/ Jim Wadman CPA
- 2) Surplus Funds
- 3) Food Sovereignty Ordinance
- 4) Parking/Traffic Ordinance proposed changes
- 5) Solar update
- 6) Electric School Bus – conversation
- 7) Completion of sidewalk project on Pleasant St.
- 8) Discussion about lighting plan supplied by MMA for TSSOM and Dock Area
- 9) Refresh Committee Charters
- 10) Civility and conduct
- 11) Communications
- 12) Part time Economic Development Coordinator
- 13) DECD Grant
- 14) Historic Preservation Grant
- 15) Schedule Budget work sessions

Selectboard Correspondence February 5, 2024 – February 20, 2024

February 5 – Brock Muir – Seasonal Parking/Town Overreach

February 5 – Ann Robinson – CMA report re: Food Options

February 6 – Ann Robinson – Transparency Issue

February 6 – Ann Robinson – An ebbing tide strand ALL boats

February 6 – Matthew Powell – List of CMA Members

February 7 – Ann Robinson – CMA Survey on Mobile Food Vending

February 8 – Ann Robinson – Re: Question about Cozy Bo Bakery

February 9 – Cathy Muir – Traffic Calming

February 10 – Matt Powell – Harassment

February 11 – Michelle Robinson – Disinformation

February 12 – Ann Robinson – Civility

February 13 – Danielle Mutty – Water Street Storm Damage

February 14 – Community Childhood Learning Place - Annual Report

February 16 – Matt Powell – Results of CMA Survey on Food Trucks