

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



DATE: Monday, June 17, 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: Liz Parish, Scott Vogell, Brooke & Gil Tenney, Pat Bishop, Gus Basile, Tom Comiciotto, Marc Pelletier, Julia Gray (Wilson Museum), Don Tenney, Jeff Ackerman, Joe Slocum, Josh Adam, David Adams, Judy & Doug Fitzsimmons, and David Avery of the Castine Patriot.

Zoom: Helen Miller, Michelle Robinson, Mary Kneisel and Brock Muir.

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. Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve the General Fund Warrant in the amount of \$89,818.06. Second by Dan Leader. Roberta said this warrant covers 74 different bills including deposit for 4th of July fireworks, stipends for Election Clerks, Olver Associates for utility operations and the rest for basic business. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes:

General Fund Warrant approved 3-0.

Gordon MacArthur made motion to approve the Water Warrant in the amount of \$14,607.57.

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

Water Warrant approved 3-0.

Minutes: Dan Leader made motion to approve the May 20, 2024, Selectboard Mtg minutes.

Second by Gordon MacArthur. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: 5/20/24

Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 2-0 (abstained by Roberta Boczkiewicz =absent).

Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve the June 3, 2024, Selectboard Mtg minutes.

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

6/3/24 Selectboard Mtg minutes approved 2-0 (abstained by Gordon MacArthur =absent).

Old Business: Roberta gave an update to Gus Basile's inquiry from the previous mtg regarding letter received in March '23 from an attorney on behalf of Kevin Coady. Roberta said when looking back through the minutes, mention of the letter was made at several Selectboard mtgs. Roberta gave dates of mtgs and read portions of the minutes that mentioned the letter; Roberta also pointed out that details in the letter made were in comparison to a town/city in upstate New York with does not reflect Castine. Discussion.

Gus Basile was adamant and saying the Town said they would hold a "Public Hearing."

A "Public Hearing" was indeed held on Dec 14, 2023, not specifically about this letter but the letter was brought up and Kevin Coady was present at that Public Hearing.

Susan Macomber, Town Clerk, clarified the difference between "Public Hearing and Public Mtg". The Town/Selectboard referred to the letter at several mtgs which are open to the public and ARE public mtgs. A "Public Hearing" is not required.

Gordon MacArthur said the Selectboard can talk about this issue more in a Work Session.

Gus also said he was disappointed still because about 4 years ago the Town held many mtgs with Port City Architecture regarding the Fire Station which the public was not invited to or was able to participate in (what Gus is referring to is when Port City Architecture met with Town Officials, i.e., Town Manager and Fire Dept personnel to gather information they needed to write their report).

New Business:

Item 1. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving MVU application – Wilson Museum 8/24/24 Special Event/Festival.

Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve. Second by Dan Leader. Gordon confirmed the fee. Shawn said it was \$25 for a Special Event/Festival in the Ordinance. Dan asked what type of artisans would be present. Julia Gray answered at this time a wood carver, glass blower and others are starting to line up. This will be a pilot year with hopes to hold annually and add to it. With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes: MVU – Wilson Museum – approved 3-0.

Item 2. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving FY25 Sewer Budget as recommended by the Utility Board. The amount of the budget recommended is \$575,974 which is \$2,380 increase compared to last year. Dan Leader made motion to approve. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz. With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: FY25 Sewer Budget – approved 3-0.

Item 3. Gordon MacArthur introduced approving Sewer Rate increase as recommended by the Utility Board. The increase would be 1.5% higher effective 7/1/24. Gordon read the quarterly and seasonal minimums and overage outline.

Quarterly minimum = \$157.55/up to 800 cuft; Overage = \$28.30/each 100 cuft thereafter.

Seasonal minimum = \$630.20/up to 800 cuft; Overage = \$28.30/each 100 cuft thereafter.
Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve. Second by Dan Leader.
With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Sewer Rate Increase – approved 3-0.

Item 4. Gordon MacArthur introduced updates from Boards/Committees: a) Planning Board. Tom Comiciotto was present and gave brief update. Tom said applications to the Planning Board have slowed down quite a bit. He informed that long-time member Doug Wellington who has been Chair for many years is retiring and stepping down from the Board. Tom said Doug is a lawyer, so it was nice to have a lawyer at the helm.
The Selectboard thanked Tom for the updates.

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

#7 Grant Update: Applying for the T-Mobile grant was approved at the April 16, 2024, Selectboard Mtg.

Gordon asked if the line painters will be doing the blue handicap markings? Shawn said yes. Roberta asked if the Bureau of General Services Mtg (6/25 at 1PM) will be open to the public? Shawn said it could but there would be no public participation. The public can submit questions in writing ahead of time. If deemed appropriate, Shawn can make mention of questions at mtg. The main reason for this mtg is to have the Commissioner sign off on MMA's pier lighting plan.

Item 6. Other Business as Required: Roberta Boczkiewicz announced that the Castine Touring Company (CTC) has a new club car coming - "Sally." CTC requests to use the Town Common for a Sally reception on Sunday, 6/23 from 1-3PM; cake and lemonade will be served. Selectboard all agreed to give authorization to the Town Manager to approve the request since Roberta and Gordon are CTC volunteers and there is no quorum for a vote.

Communications: a) email from Cam Brien regarding 2029 planning for the 250th anniversary of the famous Penobscot Expedition. Some thought it might be more appropriate that this request go to Historic Society/Wilson Museum. The Selectboard decided to discuss at an upcoming Work Session.

b) email from Dan Gardner of the REC Committee with outline of "Summer Slam Wednesday" activities. These events will take place at Fort George or the Backshore. Advertisement of the upcoming events will be posted soon. Roberta Boczkiewicz made motion to approve using Fort George and Backshore for Summer Slam Wednesday activities. Second by Dan Leader.

With no other discussion, Gordon asked for votes: Fort George/Backshore for Summer Slam Wednesdays – approved 3-0.

c) letter from Rachael Cotoni, MMA Executive Assistant to the President, requesting to use Backshore Beach area for a faculty/staff BBQ on July 24th; rain date July 25th. Dan Leader made motion to approve. Second by Roberta Boczkiewicz.

With no discussion, Gordon asked for votes: MMA BBQ at Backshore – approved 3-0.

Gordon acknowledged the public present: -Liz Parish asked about Safe Harbor's schedule and lease. Safe Harbor is serving breakfast & lunch; open to 3PM; every day but Thursdays (due to medical treatment). Liz commented that their hours of operation is sporadic. She said this is an important facility to our Town. Discussion. The reason Safe Harbor closed early the day before (Sun 6/16) was because it ran out of food.

-Don Tenney asked if and where the approved list of MVU could be found and hours of operation. The Selectboard would have to consider posting on the website.

Don also said he has been patiently working with Consolidated Communications regarding a tree falling on lines on Wadsworth Cove Rd. Don got a ticket # back in March. They said they would resolve on 6/6 which has not happened. He is getting the run around. The tree is clearly on data lines and will eventually cut through and fall into the road.

-Jeff Ackermann asked if Safe Harbor's hours could be posted on the website? Selectboard said they will have to discuss.

-Marc Pelletier asked if the section of Perkins St (Main St to Pleasant St) will be one-way? Yes, signs are being ordered. Marc also asked about street signs and others that were stolen earlier this year. Gordon said those are being ordered as well. Marc then asked if anything is being done about the signs in violation of our sign codes at a local business. Shawn said he could not respond on that issue. Lastly, Marc reiterated his disappointment on MMA's lack of supplying the Town its lighting plan for their pier project. Shawn said MMA has submitted its lighting plan but he requested some time ago to get a rendered drawing of the plan.

Dan Leader said at the last T/G Mtg, Interim President, Craig Johnson, assured he would get the Town frequent updates on the project and work on getting rendering drawings of the lighting plan. Marc said this is our Town and it would be nice to see a final prototype of what our harbor would look like. At this time no one knows what it would look like. He said he understands it is out of our control, but it would be nice to see it.

-Gus Basile asked what the role of Olver Associates is? They are a licensed firm that is contracted to run our Water & Sewer Depts. Gus asked if there is a conflict of interest with getting professional opinion from them regarding the two (2) RFPs received for the soil testing at the Battle Ave lot. No, there is no conflict of interest.

Dan Leader said if he is not clear with understanding the results from the labs he will urge as a Selectboard member to get clarity from another agency/expert.

-Judy Fitzsimmons asked about the two (2) seasons for the soil testing process. SME wishes to evaluate wet soil and dry soil. Judy asked if the timetable would be extended if we have a dryer

summer or vice versa? SME will have to let us know but ideally if we are experiencing a dryer or wetter summer then likely the timetable would need to be extended. Judy also asked what qualifies as "wet;" how much rain is needed? Not sure, the Town will have to ask SME.

-Gus Basile asked how far back from the road at the Battle Ave lot would a proposed fire station be located? Shawn said it is not known as we do not have a design yet. Shawn said conditions outlined in the Zoning Ordinance can be reviewed but that is it. Discussion.

-David Adams asked if Bastille Day on 7/14/24 is on the list for summer events? Yes, it is.

PAST ACTIONS: NONE.

Selectboard Comments: - Gordon MacArthur said the MMA State of Maine Training ship may be returning to Castine. Captain Mac MacArthur has requested to return to Castine to disembark as it would be easier and save the Academy money. This would depend on the pier construction schedule. The ship would leave almost immediately for Philadelphia.

As of now, the new ship is expected in mid-2025.

Next Mtgs:

Monday, 6/24/24 – Work Session at 9AM, if needed.

Monday, 7/1/24 – Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg at 4PM.

Monday, 7/15/24 – Selectboard/Assessors & Overseers of the Poor Mtg at 4PM.

Karen Motycka, Finance Officer, said she would typically ask for a short mtg on 6/30 to approve end of the fiscal year bills but since the Selectboard are meeting on 7/1 she will have two (2) general fund warrants for the Selectboard to approve; one (1) for FY2023-24 and the other for FY2024-25.

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

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

Mtg adjourned at 5:21PM.

Minutes Susan Macomber, Town Clerk.



MEMORANDUM

To: Castine Selectboard
From: Shawn Blodgett
Date: June 17, 2024
Re: Town Manager's Report

1. Storm(s) Recovery Update.

Other than minor tweaking, the Town Dock side of the harbor has been completed. The Safe Harbor is open and operating, new umbrellas have been ordered, the new catch basins are performing as designed and the railings are complete. The connector between the Acadia Dock and the Town dock side of the harbor remains to be completed, but due to scheduling, this will not happen until the fall. We will conduct a ceremonial ribbon cutting for this area at 10:00 am on Friday, the 21st. All are invited to attend.

Beyond the connecting dock piece at the harbor, remaining to be done is shoreline stabilization for Fort Madison and an undermining fix at the Backshore Recreation Area. However, neither of these projects was as high a priority as getting the dock back open, but attention will now shift to these projects.

2. Battle Avenue Soils Characterization and Groundwater Analysis.

Representatives from Sevee and Maher Engineering (or SME) will begin their work on the Battle Avenue lot tomorrow. This work will be the first work on what will be a several month long process to test the soils and map the groundwater flow of the Battle Avenue lot (Tax Map 20, Lot 8A).



3. Paving Update.

There have been road improvement paving projects being worked on in the past week. Last week, the small connecting portion to the east of the Perkins/Pleasant intersection was completed. This paving culminates a multi-phase project of sidewalk emplacement, landscaping and paving. This morning, 330 linear feet straddling the intersection of Perkins and Tarratine intersection was paved as well as 269 lf in the vicinity of 97 Perkins was completed. As of this report, Western Court Street may be completed, but this report had to be written before the work was completed for the day. Tomorrow, approximately 850 linear feet of Wadsworth Cove Road will receive a new overlay. By the close of business tomorrow, all Priority 1 and 2 paving will be completed for the season except for the top of School Street which will need to wait to be completed following the Selectboard approving a sidewalk plan.

UPDATE 2:15 PM: The asphalt production plant had a mechanical malfunction, and our vendor was not able to complete Court Street today. The vendor is searching for other suppliers. The street has been shimmed and they were beginning to pave when they ran out of product. Most likely, this will delay the completion of our paving until the end of this week.

4. Sea Street Pump Station.

The Town of Castine signed a contract with Olver Associates Engineering right after the Selectboard authorized it at the last Board meeting. Survey work began on this project on June 11th.

5. 03 July Off Neck Cemetery Clean Up.

We are scheduling 03 July as the target date for off neck cemetery clean up and refurbishment. I'll be meeting this week with Logan Spratt, who has been spearheading this endeavor for several years this week to finalize the logistics.

The targeted cemeteries will be the following:

- 1) Avery Cemetery



2) Wilson Cemetery

3) Wescott Cemetery

A volunteer sign up sheet sign up sheet is with Sue in the front office.

6. Rosa Rugosa Mystery.

The mystery of the cut Rosa at the Backshore Recreation Area has been solved. As my tenure here is entering its sixth year, it seems that I still have a lot to learn about things that routinely happen that I may or may not ever know about. This is an accurate description of the case of the vanishing Rosa Rugosa. These plants are trimmed yearly to facilitate a safe road crossing from the volleyball and pond area to the beach. This year, they were only trimmed back more aggressively than in year's past. Though it is an invasive species, and it would be illegal to replant this species in the shoreland zone, have no fear, because as an invasive, the Rosa Rugosa will return.

7. Grant Update.

It has just been announced that Castine will be the recipient of a \$20,000 Project Canopy grant. This grant will be utilized to develop a targeted forest management plan for portions of the community. The Castine Tree Committee will supervise the funds. Next up will be a \$50,000 T-Mobile community building grant application. If the Selectboard approves, we would like to utilize these funds to create a walking path, native plant and shrub garden and possibly a story trail on the Spring Street lot at the junction of Spring and Court Streets. I respectfully request Selectboard approval to apply for this grant. There are no matching funds required for this grant.

Also, for the Selectboard's awareness, Assistant Chief Spratt is spearheading getting Castine signed up as a recipient for both the State of Maine and Federal General Services Administration surplus equipment programs. This program can provide very affordable excess equipment for sale, some of it for pennies on the dollar.



8. Around the Town.

For those that didn't know, the Castine Public Works department is down one person right now. Over the past month or so, any spare bandwidth that our 1.5 full time DPW employees had has gone to the harbor. However, as we are coming out of this rebuild, the historic signs are starting to go up and a more concerted effort to keep the grounds maintained. I was just informed that some of the signs are not in the correct location. We will fix this. The Castine Touring Company donated bench swings are in place at both Fort Madison and the Backshore Recreation Area. I can attest that the Backshore version is being utilized heavily.

A stormwater mitigation project Sewer Pump Station #1 on Western Perkins Street has been completed. As this pump station sits in a bowl, the foundation was spalling quite bad due to standing water on the back of the building. This project created a swale to carry the water around the building and out to the street where the street catch basins will pick up the water.

We are hoping that the third time is the charm for street striping. The first go resulted in a partial product which was truncated by broken equipment. The vendor then came back with repaired equipment but only had one day in Castine between other jobs. The striping remains incomplete. The vendor has been re-scheduled to Friday, the 21st.

As happens every year in May and June, Code Enforcement work has picked up. There are currently 9 applications pending processing as well as three possible pending enforcement actions. Lastly, the Bureau of General Services will be hosting a meeting regarding MMA's pier lighting plan on the 25th of June. While this is a Town of Castine driven meeting, it is not hosted by the town, but by the Bureau of General Services.