

ST. GEORGE SELECT BOARD & ASSESSORS

St. George Town Office

MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2024

The St. George Select Board & Assessors Meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m. Board Members present were Van Thompson (Chair), Steve Cartwright, Randy Elwell, Richard Erb, Irene Ames, Wendy Carr, and Jane Conrad.

Via Zoom: Present were Loreen Meyer, Adele Welch, Judy Smith, Elizabeth Johnson, Susan Most, Carol Arness, Alison Briggs, Keith Hammitte, Larry Anderson, Stephanie Smith, Anita Siegenthaler, Mandy Funkhouser, Jenny Maltais, John Falla, Brenda Armstrong, Terry Brackett, Chuck Paine, Donna Dennison, Steve Betts, Maria Baum and Stephanie Polky.

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjustments to the Agenda

The public hearings were moved to the beginning of the agenda.

Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

Minutes

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Conrad, to approve the March 11, 2024 Select Board Meeting Minutes, as amended, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Communications

There were no communications.

Warrant

Thompson

We have a payment to the school, a payment on the Port Clyde project and we have money to spend on Civic Plus for the (Inaudible) system upgrade.

Conrad

That is the regular one.

Ames

They want \$30,000 for the upgrade.

The warrant was signed.

Town Manager Report

Erb

I have a few things here. You may have seen on the news that the federal government has designated the January storm as a disaster. We will have a meeting tomorrow with the Knox County Emergency Management Agency to get more information on that. There are some things that need to be signed tonight. The town meeting warrant, which is actually two documents, one for the opening Town Meeting and the municipal election, if you could sign those. There is also an application that the questionnaire has filed for their liquor license. Because they have been in business for more than five years, it does not require a public hearing. Typically, we have just signed off on those. That's what we do here as well. If you remember, two weeks ago, we held a public hearing on the Community Development Block Grant that will help them with hiring and there was general agreement that we would apply for it on behalf of the business. When I looked at the minutes, I realized we did not have a motion to approve participating in the Community Development Block Grant. We need to actually have a vote.

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Conrad, to approve The Craginair Inn's participation in the Community Development Block Grant, and by a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Erb

I have nothing for you to sign tonight for that.

There also are various oaths of office and their certificates of appointment that need to be signed and a Comprehensive Planning Committee (Inaudible) and a stack of election (Inaudible) for the May Town election.

Sign Documents for a Proposed Land Use Ordinance Amendment Being Sent Forward by the Planning Board for Public Vote

It is that time of year. We have a lot of things to sign. I have from the Planning Board the certification of the amendment draft presentation to the voters. It has your names on it. These are the two land use ordinance amendments that went before the Planning Board last week.

Conrad

Subject to the public hearing. The accessory dwelling unit thing.

Erb

That's all I have to report.

Committee Reports

Planning Board - Carr

Carr

There was a public hearing on the new ballot language. We didn't have anyone attend in person. There were a few people attending by Zoom and there were basically no comments. There was a Planning Board meeting we discussed regarding a subdivision application for the Cline property and a separate application for the Gilbert property which go together. It was a short meeting.

Appeals Board – Conrad

Conrad

There was no meeting.

Harbor Committee - Elwell

Elwell

We just met.

Budget Committee – Thompson

Thompson

The Budget Committee has not met. We've all been going over the budget.

Cemetery Committee – Carr

Carr

They have not met.

Resiliency Committee – Thompson

Thompson

The committee would like to make sure that we announce there will be a Sebago presentation on the proposed mitigation strategies for a number of sites here in the community and the projected costs based on 2004 costs with projection to the future. That will be on Thursday night, April 4th this coming week at 7pm in the school auditorium. We'll try to get some more notice out.

Comprehensive Planning - Conrad

Conrad

The committee continues to meet, and subgroups meet to talk about different focus areas of priorities of the town. There will be a workshop this Saturday that will be focusing on the working waterfront economy and that's on the town calendar if anybody wants to attend or observe, but it's really a workshop for the committee to do its work.

Conservation Committee

Cartwright

Nothing to report.

Shellfish Committee – Elwell

Elwell

We will meet in a couple of weeks.

Solid Waste – Erb

Erb

Nothing.

Affordable Housing - Cartwright

Thompson

We already heard the report.

Traffic Safety Committee – Cartwright

Cartwright

We met this afternoon. Bonnie Percival was doing a great job as chair and they outlined they would be meeting for at least several months to work on possible recommendations to the Select Board on ways to educate, slow down speeders, maybe have some sort of campaign and find what sort of things would work, whether it's signs, things in the road or whatever. It was a positive meeting and well attended.

Update on the Port Clyde Landing Project

Erb

The comment was made about the lack of progress on the site and I can't disagree with that. The problem for the last week has been a mechanical problem with the crane. CPM is the general contractor on the project but Fleming is doing a lot of work as the steel driving company. Their Crane had broken down and there was some difficulty getting parts. They have now arrived, and the crane has been repaired. Now the issue is getting the crew back there because obviously they're in demand in other places as well. It has slowed down the process. By next meeting I'll have a report on the schedule, but it slowed us down.

Erb

Other than that, I can tell you that the flow of construction ,which is part of the project, is well underway. At least five of them have been completed now. So that's a positive.

Thompson

A total of twelve or something.

Vacancy in the Parks & Recreation Director Position Effective 7/31/2024 and Plans for Recruitment and Hiring

Erb

Ben Vail has decided he will be retiring. He will be leaving on July 31st. We will need to talk about the process for recruitment. Some of you may have been around when Ben was hired. He told me there was a committee involved, one Select Board member, and one Parks and Rec member. (Inaudible) was in that group. We're working now on the job description. Ben is coming back to me today with his suggestions and that should be ready by the end of the week. How would the Board like to proceed? Would you want it to put together a committee?

Elwell

Just advertise it and see what you get.

Thompson

I think a combination of those things. I think the committee can review some applicants, and hopefully there are several.

Erb

Has the Board ever had a liaison to the Parks and Rec Committee?

Thompson

Not that I'm aware of.

Conrad

It seems like we should.

Erb

We can talk about that. I will get you more information. I'll get you the revised updated job description and plan for advertising.

To sign the Appendices of the General Assistance Ordinance of the Town of St. George

The General Assistance Ordinance Appendices were signed.

Proposed Sublease Agreement Between the St George Volunteer Firemen's Association and the Knox County Mutual Aid Association for the Operation of the Training Building

Mike Smith

To give you some history on it, the training facility behind the Route 73 Fire Station, the Firemen's Association, purchased that property with the idea of putting in a training facility. Once we had the property, as far as insurance goes, it was a lot easier and a lot cheaper for the town to insure it than the association, so we deeded it over to the town. The property belonged to the town with the idea that we were going to build a training facility. When it came time to find some money, we needed to go to the Federal USDA to get some funding. We found out that the town was not eligible for that funding because they were too rich but the association could apply for funding. We ended up with a low interest loan and some grants. (Inaudible) They leased the property back to The Firemen's Association and in the process of doing that, the whole idea was to make it a regional facility. What we're trying to do, and actually have been doing, is to open it up to the county with the idea that the Knox County Mutual Aid Association, which is basically the organization of all the fire chiefs in the county that would run it, and the Knox County Mutual Aid Association's subcommittee which is called the Knox County Fire Training, which basically would be doing operations. Just so you know, the majority of the membership of that group is St. George fire fighters. What we need to do now, and we decided MOU with Knox County Mutual Aid Association Main Fire Services (Inaudible) Firemen's Association with the idea that we will proceed with this venture in that MOU. I believe this came out of (Inaudible) We needed to sublease that property back to the Knox County Mutual Aid Association, but in our lease in the town, and the St. George Firemen's Association say we cannot sublease it without permission from the Board. We're asking for that permission.

Conrad

I guess I would like our lawyer to look at this because it's a lot of leasing and subleasing. I don't have any problem with it. The concept is fine. I just want to make sure that if we agree to do this, there isn't any issue. I guess liability insurance was raised earlier to make sure that the right entities have insurance, in case of accidents and problems occurring to people undergoing training. We want to make sure we're covered.

Mike Smith?

Absolutely. I don't disagree with that at all. Just so you know, insurance right now is covered by the St. George Firemen's Association which has the insurance on the building. However, we are in the process of having any event that's put on by the Knox County and Mutual Aid Association, they also have to have insurance to cover whatever.

Thompson

There is existing insurance in both instances, is what you are saying?

Mike Smith?

Yes.

Thompson

I still think we need to get an opinion.

Conrad

It would just be helpful for Bill Kelley to look at the interrelationships. If we're legally allowed to do it, I certainly would be willing to make a motion that we go ahead and get that as an opinion.

Thompson

It's quite a nice facility and so utilized for the training.

Erb

You're asking for Bill Kelly to review the document?

Conrad

Right, just to make sure that there aren't any limitations based on prior ownership or leases that we had in this chronology. If it's permissible, I'd say we should do it.

Thompson

We can have Bill contact us directly.

Conrad

I assume Rick probably has copies of these agreements.

Erb

I do.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Elwell, seconded by Cartwright, to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:40pm, and by a unanimous vote the motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Taylor
Recording Secretary
Town of St. George, Maine