



SELECT BOARD MEETING
Town of Southwest Harbor
Town Office & Via Zoom*
6:00 p.m. ~ Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Minutes

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Madam Chair Ball called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Madam Chair, Carolyn Ball, Vice Chair, Natasha Johnson, James Vallette, and Luke Damon. Chapin McFarland via Zoom.

A. Excused Absences (*if any*)

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** *Request of the Town Manager for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.*

Manager Lowell requested to modify the agenda and move section F, and G ahead of D, due to volunteers being present in the audience and presenting.

Damon motioned to modify the agenda and move F and G before D. Seconded by Vallette
Vote: 5-0-0.

4. **PUBLIC HEARING:**

A. General Assistance Ordinance Appendices A-H 2023-2024: *Request of the Town Manager for a motion to adopt and sign the annual amendment of Appendices of the General Assistance Ordinance.*

Vallette motioned to adopt and sign the annual amendment of Appendices A-H 2023-2024 of the General Assistance Ordinance. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** *Request of the Town Manager for a motion “to approve the minutes of....*

A. August 22, 2023 – SB Meeting

Johnson motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

B. September 12, 2023 – SB Meeting

Johnson motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

P. 1 last name of Manager Lowell typed.

P. 4 Damon requested adding a “a” to the third sentence of the Conservation Commission Liaison report. (In wrong place.)

6. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Town Payables- W#31
Town Payroll – W#0921, 0928
Trust & Agency - #29, 30

School Payroll – W#28
School Payables – W#27

Johnson motioned to approve the warrants as presented. Seconded by Damon. Vote:5-0-0.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS: *Presentation of the monthly Budget Variance Report, Reserves Report and Revenue Variance Report.*

Manager Lowell presented the financial reports. She noted Lien Discharges are 3% lower than the amount that has elapsed. The Sand and Salt shed has been taken out of the reserves. Lowell reports things look good currently.

8. REGULAR BUSINESS:

A. JSF School Zone Beacon Upgrade to AI Remote Capability: *Request of Chief John Hall to discuss the upgrading of school 15 MPH flashing lights.*

Discussion took place regarding the JSF School Zone Beacon upgrade. Chief Hall is requesting to purchase up to date programing to be able to program the school zone lights by remote and could change the dates and times that coincided with holiday, vacation, and snow days. Currently the programing is outdated and must be manually changed with a cord that hooks into a computer. There are other aspects of the programing that Chief Hall has been unsuccessful in utilizing the current program. The cost of the new program is \$6,880 plus installation.

~~Manager Lowell advised the money could come out of the road cross safety reserve or safe routes to school grant.

~Chief Hall is not aware what the installation cost would be.

~Damon expressed he has a tough time supporting the cost of upgrading the system, and noted the worst that could happen would be the school lights flashing on a snow day, or during a vacation.

~Members would like to know the cost of the installation fees, as well as the cost of education on the current system.

B. Police Acorn Recording System Replacement: *Request of Chief John Hall to discuss the replacement of the Acorn Recording System.*

Discussion related to Chief Hall's request to enter into a purchase agreement with Equature, formally known as Acorn. The machine recording currently has reached its life expectancy. It will need to be replaced by December. The replacement cost is \$44,000 over ten years. This includes a one-time \$2,000 installation fee, \$4213.44 annually for the next ten years, and the fifth year they will replace the device at no cost to the town. Chief Hall reports Acorn was primarily used by other law enforcement agencies within the state. Equature has since taken over the company and will provide online training as well.

~Damon requested to know if you could purchase the equipment outright for a smaller amount of money.

~Damon would like to know if other surrounding agencies are continuing to stay with Equature now that it has taken over from Acorn.

~McFarland advised that Northeast Harbor uses Acorn and has had good luck with it.

It was the consensus of the members that Chief Hall reach out to other agencies to see if they are continuing to work with Equature who bought out the company.

C. SWHT Ambulance Relocation to FD Trial Period: *Request of Any Cline to introduce the potential relocation of SWHT Ambulance to Fire Department.*

Andrew Cline from the SWHT Ambulance Associate and Fire Chief Tom Chisholm were present to discuss the potential relocation of the ambulance. Cline advised the ambulance association recently ordered a brand-new ambulance. However, the height of the ambulance does not fit in the ambulance bay. Currently they have one ambulance housed at the fire station. Cline reported they have explored a lot of options and have not yet been able to come to a solution for this. They are going to continue to explore other options or ideas such as new bay doors. Until then they are looking to explore the idea of relocating the ambulance to the fire department. Cline added that there are some members in support and others not in support of the relocation.

~Chief Chisholm advised he was not for or against this plan. He has discussed with the members. He recognizes the importance of the service to the residents of the town, and if the Fire Department can help facilitate that he is willing to explore this option.

~Chief Chisholm advised he has previously had discussions with the Fire Marshall's office regarding this topic of including sleeping quarters. There would not be a lot of work needed.

~Chief Chisholm does not anticipate much of a change in the utilities, a slight increase.

~Select Board members explored why some members would not be in support of this. Cline advised that some are worried about losing the space they currently have.

~The current living quarters were built onto the municipal building, with an agreement made in the mid 1970's, that the ambulance service would pay the utilities, and if they were to relocate then the building would return to the Town. However, currently the town has been paying for the utilities.

~The ambulance is currently paying the town \$200 a month for housing the other ambulance at the Fire Department.

~Manager Lowell consulted with MMA Risk Management, and there are a couple of additional insurances item requests that need to be given to the insurance company. The additional cost would be added to the next year's agreement price.

Johnson motioned to approve the proposed 6-month trial period relocation of the SWHT Ambulance to the SWH Fire Department and authorize Town Manager, Fire Chief Tom Chisholm, and Andrew Cline to sign a written agreement of relocation between the departments. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

D. MRC Board of Directors Nomination Form: *Request of Town Manager to nominate a candidate for the election of the MRC Board of Directors*

No candidate chosen.

E. MMA Voting Delegate: *Request of Town Manager to have SB designate a voting representative.*

Johnson motioned to nominate Marilyn Lowell, and Jennifer LaHaye as voting representative and alternate, respectively. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

F. Chris' Pond Aquatic Plants Removal: *Request of Town Manager to discuss moving forward with plan removal at Chris' Pond.*

Valerie Bodner presented on behalf of the Conservation Commission the findings after exploring the permitting process with DEP for Chris' Pond removal of some vegetation in the pond. Bodner advised that an application would need to be completed along with other actions. The cost of the application would be \$386.00. Bodner advised that because the pond is believed to be formed by impounding a stream, pulling plants would be considered the impact of the stream. A qualified wetland scientist would also need to be hired to prepare attachments required for the application. There would also be costs for preparing site maps, sending mailings to abutting property owners, and advertisement for public notices.

~ Johnson and Damon both asked if the manmade pond could be drained, and then vegetation be cut.

~Bodner agreed to reach back out to DEP to further discuss possibilities.

G. Harbormaster Office: *Request of Jim Vallette and Luke Damon to continue discussion of cedar shingles, vinyl siding and electric circuit box in bathroom of the new Harbormaster Office.*

Anne Napier provided an update; she stated that that the double electrical outlet has been added to the ½ bath side of the wall. Cedar shingles used for the exterior walls of the building would be second grade 3/8 thick. This would add an additional \$1,000.00 to the cost of the building. She advised the first-grade shingles were preferred, but there would be a 12-month delay in ordering them.

Johnson motioned to approved the 3/8-inch-thick cedar shingles. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 4-1-0 Ball Nay.

H. Comprehensive Plan Implementation: *Request of Jim Vallette to discuss the implementation of Comp. Plan.*

Members discussed priority areas of where to focus. Lydia Goetz (former member of the Comprehensive Plan Update Taskforce) suggested that volunteer groups inventory the housing. A focus could be seasonal vs. year-round. Ball suggested reviewing the Town of Stonington's language and definitions that pertain to housing, in a recently created ordinance. She noted that likely that is not the direction that the town could go but the information could be helpful. Goetz volunteered her time to further investigate seasonal and year-round housing, and potential areas that lead to water & sewer hookups.

9. LIAISON REPORT:

Harbor Committee – Damon noted that the Harbormaster has not been at recent committee meetings, members are frustrated. Damon feels there is a disconnect between members w/ the Harbormaster.

ADD update: The ADD will be meeting at the SWH Town office, they are currently thinking about grant opportunities. The Hazardous Waste Collection Day At MDI HS was a success. ADD had a great discussion with Lee Worcester regarding getting cardboard going there sooner than later.

~ Several members discussed witnessing some challenging situations where committee members are not following the code of conduct.

~Select Board members should notify the Town Manager of any misconduct at meetings.

10. MANAGER REPORT: Please see report attached.

11. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING: *No action will be taken, other than to place the requested item on the next agenda.*

*JSF School Zone Beacon upgrade cost.

* Liquor License

* Investments – The First attending 10/10 Bar Harbor has been invited but not confirmed yet.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE: *Adoption of a motion to confirm the date of the next regular meeting for Tuesday, October 10th at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Office meeting room.*

Damon motioned to confirm the date of the next regular meeting for Tuesday, October 10, at 6:00 p.m. in the town office meeting room. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

Damon motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Seconded by Johnson. Vote:5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer E. LaHaye
Town Clerk

APPROVED

Carolyn Ball, Chair

Natasha Johnson, Vice Chair

Jams Vallette

Luke Damon

Chapin McFarland