

REPORT ON THE SELECTBOARD MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2018

Prepared by Rick Cliffe

Note: (1). These are not official minutes -- -- just notes taken by me. Official minutes will be available from the Town Office and will be posted on the Town web site and at the Town Office and other places following Board approval at the next meeting.

(2). If anyone wishes to stop receiving these reports, they may simply hit "Reply" and request to be deleted from the list or say "Unsubscribe."

(3). Reports of earlier meetings and some supplementary materials are available at Rick Freeman's Town Meeting website - www.singingbridge.net <<http://www.singingbridge.net>> .

THE MEETING: There were 2 members of the public present.

The minutes of the meeting of November 27, 2018 were approved. They are posted on the Town website.

MOST IMPORTANT/INTERESTING ITEMS: In my judgment, the following items were the most important things covered during the meeting.

* New State Representative: Allison Hepler, newly elected to the State House, came to the meeting to introduce herself and to ask the Board what issues with State government are of importance to Georgetown. There was a half-hour discussion that covered many issues including the following.

* Allison said she is a selectman in Woolwich so she understands the type issues Board members deal with.

* Rich Donaldson brought up "unfunded mandates", laws and/or regulations that are invoked on the Towns without the necessary funds to carry them out.

* Mary McDonald mentioned problems with roads (lack of state funding, maintenance, etc), including the extra burden to Georgetown because of heavy summer traffic to/from Reid State Park. She noted that the "revenue sharing" for the park is a pittance.

* Mary also brought up Tree Growth and Open Space programs, which dramatically reduce property tax revenue. The State provides minimal reimbursement.

* Mary also brought up the State shifting tax responsibility to the towns. Georgetown's revenue sharing is only about \$20,000.

* Amanda Campbell mentioned the cost of Elections to the Town. There is no State reimbursement for mailing absentee ballots or monitoring the election.

* Rich mentioned docks with floats (many in Georgetown) and new State DEP regulations that require pulling them completely above the waterline, a process that can be very difficult because of the ledge.

* Rich and Bob Trabona discussed laws/regulations relating to rebuilding or remodeling more than 50% of structures in the shore zone. Conflicts between Federal, State and local rules can make it impossible to maintain or enhance the property.

* Bob also mentioned that State regulations consider natural ledge as part of the impervious surface on the lot, sometimes dramatically reducing the owner's square footage for structures.

* Assessing Issues: The Board completed review of two open abatement requests. One was reconciling different acreages between the property deed and a survey. The other request was for both a small lot and deteriorating structure. They granted part of the request. Two additional items are with the assessor for review.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Mary reported on correspondence received. For a complete listing of this correspondence, see the Meeting Agenda at: www.georgetownme.com/Meeting-Agendas-and-Minutes.php
<<http://www.georgetownme.com/Meeting-Agendas-and-Minutes.php>>

The most interesting items were:

- * Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) provided notice of renewals for (19) Limited Purpose Aquaculture Licenses for 2019. The notice will be posted in the Town Office. Residents can submit comments to DMR until December 31st.
- * Maine Coast Heritage Trust sent their Fall 2018 newsletter. It is available to read in the Town Office.
- * Tedford Housing sent their Fall/Winter newsletter. It is available to read in the Town Office.
- * Funding requests were received from Maine Public Radio and New Hope for Women. Both were forwarded to the FAC.

OLD BUSINESS:

- * Boards and Committees: Coleen Hudson submitted her resignation from the School Committee effective November 26th. The Committee has 30 days to find/appoint a temporary replacement now through June 2019. This position will be refilled through election in June.
- * Town and Fire Department administrative support: The Board agreed with a draft help wanted add to be posted around town and in the Times Record.
- * Animal Control Officer: The Board agreed with a draft help wanted add to be posted around town and in the Times Record.

UPCOMING EVENTS/DATES:

Date & Time

Event

Place

Comment

Mon-Wed, Dec 24-26

Town Office Closed

Holiday

The next meeting of the Selectboard will be at 7 PM on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at the Town Office.

Prepared and distributed by Rick Cliffe

REPORT ON THE SELECTBOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 27, 2018

Prepared by Rick Cliffe

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THE MEETING: There were 2 members of the public present.

The minutes of the meeting of November 13, 2018 were approved. They will be posted on the Town website.

MOST IMPORTANT/INTERESTING ITEMS: In my judgment, the following items were the most important things covered during the meeting.

* Assessing Items: A resident submitted a letter regarding her easement to Maine Heritage Trust. She was surprised at the "small amount" her land assessment went down on this year's property tax bill. After a short discussion, the Board decided to have assessor Bill Van Tuinen provide an explanation. Mary advised 4 abatement requests were received this week. The Board decided to forward them to Bill Van Tuinen for review/comment. They will be addressed at the next meeting.

* Fire Department Administration: Three GVFD members came for a follow-on to discussions at a previous (October) Selectboard meeting. Feedback from Town counsel is that the Town can take over financial services without GVFD losing its nonprofit – 503c3 – status. Justin LoDolce advised that the department has come up with a plan for accomplishing the "business manager" functions which will be put in place by January 1st. The rest of the discussion concerned having a new Town position which would be part support to the Town Office and part financial support to the GVFD. There was a brief discussion of duties and responsibilities. Mary indicated that the Town will advertise the part-time position with an anticipated start date of March 2019.

* Pay Increase for Town Employees: This was a follow-up to discussions at the last Selectboard meeting. By law, minimum wage in Maine will increase by \$1/hr. Rich Donaldson proposed that some employees that earn more than minimum wage should also be given a raise. Geoff Birdsall's position is that those employees currently at minimum wage be increased to the new minimum in January and other wage increases be addressed during the Town budget cycle as has been past practice. Rich pointed out that pay increases are not always granted even when budgeted and approved at the Town meeting. After substantial discussion Rich made a motion that specific 3% increases approved at the Town meeting be granted in January. The motion was approved.

* Animal Control Officer (ACO) Resignation: This was a follow-up to discussion at the last Selectboard meeting. There was a brief discussion about local town's approaches. Geoff Birdsall pointed out that Sagadahoc Sheriff covers some of the duties for some smaller towns in the county. Bath and Topsham both have part-time ACOs. Nobody in Georgetown has shown interest to date. Geoff pointed out that we just want someone on-call, as it was in the past. It was suggested that the Town run an ad in the Times Record and post the position on the Town website . But the Board doesn't expect much interest.

CORRESPONDENCE:

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The most interesting items were:

* The Lifelight Foundation submitted a request for \$520 (50cents per resident) noting that they have transported 4 Georgetown residents since 1998. The request will be forwarded to the FAC.

NEW BUSINESS:

* Municipal Valuation Return: The Board approved and signed off on the report based on Mary's review and recommendation. Total valuation is \$483M which generates \$3.7M taxes at the current 7.7mil rate. Mary noted that there are 287 Homestead Exemptions in Georgetown.

* TOPMB Question: Rich Donaldson brought a question from the TOPMB. The Balmy Days boat docks in Georgetown every Sunday afternoon during the summer season. Because of its size, the boat is docked on the Commercial Float and passengers must climb the commercial ramp when they debark and embark. TOPMB questions whether this presents a liability risk to the Town. There was a short discussion. Board members believe that Town insurance covers this situation but they agreed to check it out.

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The next meeting of the Selectboard will be at 7 PM on Tuesday, December 11 at the Town Office.

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REPORT ON THE SELECTBOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 13, 2018

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THE MEETING: There were 2 members of the public present.

The minutes of the meeting of October 23, 2018 were approved. They will be posted on the Town website.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Mary reported on correspondence received. For a complete listing of this correspondence, see the Meeting Agenda at: www.georgetownme.com/Meeting-Agendas-and-Minutes.php <<http://www.georgetownme.com/Meeting-Agendas-and-Minutes.php>>

The most interesting items were:

- * ME Department of Marine Resources (DMR) notice that there will be a public hearing for an aquaculture lease at 6 pm, December 10th at the school.
- * ME Revenue Services sent their Proposed 2019 (actually based on 2017 data) Valuation for the Town. The State Valuation is \$469 M vs the Town's \$479 M.
- * ME Revenue Services sent their draft Sales Analysis for review/comment. This document compares actual property sales amounts against property assessments. There are significant variations, both negative and positive. After brief discussion the Board tabled comments until members have an opportunity to review the data.

OLD BUSINESS:

- * Fire Department Administration: The Board will continue discussions about GVFD needs at the next meeting. Meanwhile a couple of legal questions have been sent to Town Counsel for review and response.

NEW BUSINESS:

* Animal Control Officer (ACO) Resignation: Sarah Mancini notified the Board of her resignation. She will stay on until a replacement is identified and sworn in. The Board had a brief discussion of issues related to this position. Rich Donaldson advised he had talked to the Bath ACO and intends to talk to both Arrowsic and West Bath ACOs about the position. It was noted that Kate MacKay may have interest.

* Business Sign: Georgetown Historical Society submitted an application for a new Business Sign. The Board agreed to approve and sign off on the application (as required by State law).

* Hourly Town Employees: Rich Donaldson recommended that the Board consider increasing hourly pay for Town employees because the State minimum wage will increase by \$1 per hour effective in January 2019. There was some discussion about the amount of budget involved and insuring some level of consistency with the Fire Department which establishes its rates independently. Mary was asked to provide an estimate for proposed \$1/hr or 10% increases covering the period of January through June 2019. The Board will continue discussion at the next meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS/DATES:

Date & Time

Event

Place

Comment

Saturday, Nov 17, 9-11 am

Rabies Clinic

Town Office

Wednesday, Nov 21

Town Office closing at noon

Thursday, Nov 22

Town Office closed

The next meeting of the Selectboard will be at 7 PM on Tuesday, November 27 at the Town Office.

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