

REPORT ON SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF MARCH 13, 2012

Prepared by Rick Freeman

Note: (1). If anyone wishes to stop receiving these reports, they may simply hit "Reply" and request to be deleted from the list or say "Unsubscribe."

(2). 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.

(3). Reports of earlier meetings and some supplementary materials are available at my Town Meeting website:

www.singingbridge.net

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

The minutes of the meetings of February 28 and March 4, 2012 were approved. The March 4 meeting was entirely in executive session to discuss a personnel matter at the Transfer Station. The minutes of this meeting will soon be posted at the own web page:

: www.georgetownme.com/Meeting-Agendas-and-Minutes.php

MOST IMPORTANT/INTERESTING ITEMS: In my judgment, the following item was the most important thing covered during the meeting.

1. Tree Growth Tax Status of Bruce Poliquin's and other lots. Mr. Poliquin has applied for a reclassification of his tree growth parcel as open space. This is allowed under Section 581 of the Tree Growth Tax Law. If his application is granted, the land would be classified as permanently protected open space and would be eligible for a 50% reduction in assessed value for property tax purposes. In his application, Mr. Poliquin stated that the tree growth classification had become an unfair distraction to the municipal officers and his neighbors, and that he had made a good faith effort to follow his forest management plan. His application has been reviewed by the Town's Tax Assessor, Mr. Bill van Tuinen, who raised several questions about details. The Selectmen will ask Mr. Poliquin to respond to the questions and to make changes to his application as necessary. They will consider the revised application at their next meeting.

Regarding the issues raised by Mr. Poliquin's use of the Tree Growth Tax Law, a member of the public asked if the Town was in effect saying that it will not pursue the matter. He expressed the view that the Town should say whether Mr. Poliquin's use of the Tree Growth Tax Law was legal or not. It was noted that the Tree Growth Tax Law was complicated and unclear on several points and that the question of what the Town could do now was complicated by the fact that the Town had approved the application for tree growth status in 2004. Geoff Birdsall said that the Selectmen's role was to look after the best interests of the taxpayers of the Town. There was no guarantee that the Town would prevail in any legal action it might take and that it might cost more in legal expenses than the Town could recover. Given the proposed reclassification of the parcel he favored dropping the matter. I commented that there were bills before the Legislature to close some of the loop holes in the current Tree Growth Tax Law and that people should urge their legislators to vote for bills to tighten up the law.

The Selectmen also discussed what to do about the other 9 parcels currently in Tree Growth. It was decided (a) to review the three parcels that had been renewed during calendar year 2011; and (b) to review the Forest Management Plans of the remaining six lots when they come up for renewal. Since the Forest Management Plans are not public documents, these reviews will be conducted in executive sessions.

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

The most interesting items were:

- A letter from the Department of Conservation stating that the Town's payment under the State Park Fee Sharing Program for 2011 was \$5,170.49. Mary said that the payment had been received.
- A flyer from the Sagadahoc County Emergency Management Administrator about "Big Green Boxes" for collection of unused medication that are being placed in Police and Sheriff Department offices. The flyer has been posted in the own Office and Post Office.
- A copy of the Georgetown Central School audit for the period ending June 30, 2011 has been received and forwarded on to the Town auditor for review and inclusion in the Town audit.
- A notice from the Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District about a septic system training for Local Plumbing Inspectors. Jason Lang is interested in replacing Bob Trabona when he retires. Jason will take this course. The Selectmen agreed to reimburse Jason for the fee.
- A notice from Rescom Environmental Corp stating that they are conducting an audit of an existing telecommunications facility at 60 North End Road. They are inviting comment on the possible effects that the existing facility may have on sites or structures of historic significance.
- A letter from Joann Klonowski regarding pond flooding at a site on Sagadahoc Bay Rd and suggesting a vertical pipe instead of a horizontal one. This was forwarded to the Road Commissioner.
- Another email from David Lambert regarding the Poliquin property. He has been questioning whether the eligible forested land meets the minimum size under the Tree Growth Tax Law (10 acres).
- An email from John Jones to Mr. Birdsall with questions about the Biennial Transportation Report and offering his expertise and help on it. The email has been forwarded to Dale Savoie and Jon Hentz.
- A letter from Ellen Browning, Chair of the Working League Fair, requesting use of the church beginning in July for storage of white elephant items and for the use of the basement for the book sale. This was approved by the Selectmen.
- The recycling report for February from Lincoln County. Recycling is up over the previous year while the tonnages of bulky waste and waste from the compactor are down.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Regarding Smart Meters, it was reported that the installation in Georgetown is now about 95 complete.
2. The Selectmen were asked if there were any comments on the Sagadahoc County Commissioners' request for input on ways the County can save and directions they should take to reduce the budget? Bill Plummer suggested a 10% across the board cut. There were no other suggestions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Selectmen then went into executive session to discuss an application for a substitute at the Transfer Station and some legal issues regarding the suit filed by the Kosalkas

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

Prepared and distributed by Rick Freeman