

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

APPROVED
7/17/24

MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair Shey Conover, Vice Chair Lauren Bruce, Melissa Burns, Peter Anderson, and Steve Pendleton

Others Present:

Town Manager Janet Anderson, John King, Cressica Brazier, Frank Start, Elizabeth Hayden, Deborah Hayden, Naoise Cunningham, Kizzi Barton, Janis Petzel, Bill Thomas

Others Present via Zoom:

Brian Bohanon, Jennifer West, Josh Leach, Maggy Willcox, Pete, Peter Willcox.

Call to Order: Chair Shey Conover called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, and a quorum was established.

Minutes of June 18, 2024. P. Anderson pointed out a missing "it" in his Individual Comment.

MOTION BY M. Burns, seconded by L. Bruce, to approve the minutes of June 5, 2024 Regular Meeting, as amended. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no.

VISITOR COMMENTS/PETITIONS

Frank Start asked about the easement that the Town entered into with Wendy Hammet, on her property on Meadow Pond Road, which abuts the Town lot where the Up-Island Public Safety Garage will be built. Frank pointed out that this easement was executed in April, before it was voted on at the Annual Town Meeting of June 15. J. Anderson explained that this road is owned by the Town, but part of it goes onto Wendy's property. In preparation for the Up-Island Public Safety Garage, a surveyor found the discrepancy, and we were following the attorney's counsel to execute the easement. Frank questioned why this was voted on at Town Meeting if it had already been executed. It was filed with the registry on May 24th. S. Conover stated that this is the first she is hearing of this issue, and will be happy to talk with the attorney about it to learn about the process, and to understand the execution vs. the language that was on the Town Meeting Warrant.

Deborah Hayden asked about East Shore Drive and the Town's plans going forward concerning emergency access points to the end of East Shore Drive. There's been a lot of erosion of the beach in Charlotte's Cove. People are parking in the middle of East Shore Drive to use the beach, so it becomes inaccessible. Her understanding was that there was an emergency access point via Boardman Road and the gate at the MacDougall property, as well as through the cemetery. The road has been grassed over and the erosion hasn't been addressed. Is this still an emergency access? J. Anderson answered that it is still

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

supposed to be an access point for emergency vehicles, if the road is passable. We haven't had a stabilization project for that end of the road yet, and we still need to have an engineer look at it. Deborah is concerned because there is now grass beyond the gate on MacDougall's property, which seems to indicate that it is no longer a road. The gate looks like the end of the road, and people just park there. J. Anderson stated that at one time, Mr. MacDougall offered to put in a turnaround/parking area. Elizabeth Hayden (Impy) added that part of their concern is grass is being planted on the north side of the gate. It's her understanding that Mr. MacDougall and the Boardmans were willing to let the Town use that road in an emergency. We're wondering if he is planning to make that into a lawn and abandon that part of the drive; then it won't be an emergency road anymore. J. Anderson will check with the lawyer. About a year ago, Bill Boardman and Dave Dyer went over there to look at the access. S. Conover stated that around the time of the January storms, there was some email correspondence about keeping it open. Impy stated that when Charles Verrill put that gate up, he was told to put in a turnaround. It's not not being kept up. There is also a float on the north side the beach at Charlotte's Cove. It was washed up during one of the storms, and it's cutting into the road. It should be removed right away. J. Anderson stated that the turnaround was enhanced several years back for snowplows to use. S. Conover suggested sending Public Works folks there to assess how things are being used and develop some recommendations, as well as have some additional communication with Mr. MacDougall to reinforce the agreement on emergency response. Deborah added that we should think about the plowing situation as well. S. Pendleton asked if we have a written agreement with Mr. MacDougall. P. Anderson found that his email indicates there's an agreement. S. Conover stated it's time to revisit the situation and make some improvements. J. Anderson will go over and take some pictures. Impy added that there are some markers on the beach. She is wondering if there's been a survey. Kizzi stated MacDougall had a survey done a couple months ago. S. Conover suggested we call boatyards to find out whose float is on the beach and who maintains it.

S. Conover asked J. Anderson to report on any improvements on the existing seawall that was done this past year, and any plans for Loranus Cove. J. Anderson stated that Farley & Sons are coming next week to finish up and repair the hole in the top of the wall. They will also do some seeding, and repair a culvert for Lars Nelson. She had Gartley & Dorsky prepare a plan for repairing Loranus Cove. We will put that out to bid. However, there's not enough in budget for that. S. Conover stated she thought we had talked with the attorneys about using the existing Capital Reserve funds for that. J. Anderson stated we weren't able to do it at that time, but she feels confident we can do it in the next year, with the Undesignated Fund Balance. We should put out to bid soon and get the process started. J. Anderson will speak with Bill Lane at Gartley & Dorsky.

FERRY SERVICE UPDATE

John King reported that he received correspondence from Rick Lattimer, North Haven Administrator.

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

MOTION BY L. Bruce, seconded by M. Burns, to include correspondence from Rick Lattimer in the Ferry Update. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

CORRESPONDENCE

Rick Lattimer, North Haven Administrator, request to Select Board to sign a joint letter from all the islands to Gov. Mills to keep the pressure on her to solve the Ferry Service staffing issues.

- Jon Emerson, Chair of the Ferry Service Advisory Board, sent this correspondence to John King and the other island representatives.
- Since that letter was circulated, as of June 28th, there was a news article about how the Governor's office had DOT appropriate over \$736,000 to hire ferry staff. That's being handled by an out-of-state third party, Seaward Services.
- The other day, John King was copied on an email from Peter Drury, a resident of Vinalhaven, and former employee of the ferry service. The email indicates that if Seaward is successful in finding people, those people will be getting paid well in excess of what state employees are being paid.
- L. Bruce noticed that Seaward is recruiting out of Albany, IN. If they are recruiting people from out of state, are we also going to be paying for their housing? John stated he doesn't know about that. According to the news article, this money is being allocated to hire three captains, two ABs, and one engineer.
- When service is interrupted, it's usually because they don't have enough deck crew. If Vinalhaven or North Haven misses a run, that's a bigger deal than it is for Islesboro. We need to be sensitive to that. When the MCS was out of service, we got Vinalhaven's big boat for quite some time. Vinalhaven is usually the first to sacrifice boat runs.
- John spoke with Jon Emerson today. The North Haven Select Board is in agreement to send the letter as is.
- S. Pendleton explained that a PPP is a Public-Private Partnership. A lot of cities that are in financial trouble have started to utilize this model. The question to keep in mind and maybe present the to the ferry service: Is the \$736,000 a kind of beta testing for a PPP relationship to augment or take over the ferry service?
- Frank asked if we know if there is contract language that stops this company from recruiting current state employees to the other side?
- S. Conover stated that the Town has little control over contracts that DOT is entering. One suggestion she has for the draft letter: In the second to last paragraph, "As Governor... find a solution to the pay problem." Add: "*in a fair and equitable way to retain existing staff and attract new members.*"
- M. Burns suggested signing this letter and then sending our own. John King stated he feels it would be best to have one letter. L. Bruce suggested using this as a template and writing one to match what we want to say. This is a draft. We can add some language. S. Conover suggested we let the other islands know that Islesboro Select Board wants to emphasize "*fair and equitable compensation be*

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

prioritized for retaining existing staff and attracting much needed new talent to the Service.”

- P. Anderson feels that we need to hit the pay-rate point hard. He thinks it's insane that the biggest complaint we hear is that the Ferry Service isn't paying their employees enough, and they're turning around and offering almost ¾ of a million dollars to a contract agency to then pay out-of-state employees almost twice as much. If the State is able to pay an out-of-state agency, why are they not paying the current employees more? This is unbearably infuriating.
- John King replied that he hasn't done analysis to compare apples to apples. State employees have pensions, health benefits, etc. S. Conover added that we can reinforce what feels important for them to consider. We need more information.
- P. Anderson added that this will probably increase our ferry tickets as well.
- Frank added that state employees have 8-step pay system. Step 4 is now \$15. OS (deck hands) got pay raises only because the state minimum wage went up.
- Discussion of whether to alter this letter slightly, add a separate paragraph, or do a follow-up letter. S. Conover feels we don't have enough information right now to say anything in a stronger way.

MOTION BY S. Pendleton, seconded by L. Bruce, to take letter, add change suggested, and send back to group via Jon Emerson. Discussion about getting more information for a follow-up. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

J. Anderson will speak with Rick Lattimer. John King will send Word document that can be edited.

John King also reported that he wrote to Bill Geary and Bill Pulver with the questions the Select Board had regarding the design of the new ferry, and asked if Gilbert & Associates took our survey into account, and how we got to where we are now. He had a Zoom meeting on June 26th, with Bill Geary, John Gilbert, Karyn Cox, and Mackenzie Kersbergen, from the DOT. They basically had three concepts:

- A. Concept given to John one year ago: open deck, seating at deck level, but only 50 seats.
- B. John still hasn't seen this concept: open deck, seating deck level and above. Both concepts A & B were considered. Cons: both had stability issues, Concept B required two pilot houses.
- C. Chosen design. Basically MCS 2.0. No deck-level seating, requires an elevator. John asked them what happens when the elevator breaks, can the boat run? They didn't give a clear answer. They are pushing this design. With the rails out, average width of the outside lanes is 9'6" (current 9').

John felt the attendees didn't want to be in the meeting. He told them he didn't see any innovation.

John is frustrated. It might be time for the Select Board to find someone else to represent Islesboro at the Ferry Service Advisory Board.

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

- Frank asked if we have documentation on center line vehicles that are left behind each trip to support the cause for an open deck. He also asked about fire suppression for EVs. John replied that there is a Ferry service in Norway that won't take EVs. John has raised this issue. If there is a fire, it would be easier to get to it on an open deck.
- Frank stated he would be happy to represent Islesboro as an alternate.
- L. Bruce asked John if Gabe has been involved. John replied that he has been keeping Gabe Pendleton involved.
- Next Ferry Service meeting will be on 7/18. John can attend.
- S. Conover stated that she appreciates all the effort that John has put in over the years. We couldn't have had a better advocate. Round of applause.
- Maggy Willcox thanked John for doing such a great job and being so dedicated.
- John communicated his reaction to the meeting to Bill Pulver and Bill Geary.
- John suggests that some sort of communication be made to the DOT and the Ferry Service about what we think about all this.

MOTION BY M. Burns, seconded by L. Bruce, to take the Agenda out of order. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Rural Energy Prize Support for PHASE II—Cressica Brazier.
 - Cressica Brazier from the Energy Committee reported on the status of the Energy Prize.
 - This is the last week of the Department of Energy's Rural Energy Prize year. One year ago, the Energy Committee, on behalf of the Town, won the \$100,000 Phase I Prize.
 - Next Friday we will be submitting our report to be eligible for the \$200,000 Phase II of the Rural Energy Prize. We've been living Phase II for the past year, and we're going to report on it, and hopefully win some money for it.
 - The report will include evidence of our work toward two clean energy projects: Solar Arrays and Home Energy Efficiency.
 - Our subcommittee team for the Rural Energy Prize, the Energy Hub, is working hard to pull that report together. Active members and contributors are: Cressica, Kizzi Barton (Community Energy Coordinator), Harriet Bering (Chair of the Energy Committee), Bill Thomas, Janis Petzel, Trevor Blackford, Monica Mullins, and Holly Fields.
 - The most important part of our submission is the what the Prize Competition calls a "Letter of Commitment" from the community leadership to verify that we've been engaging with the community and the Town of Islesboro as we've reported.
 - Today we are asking the Select Board for this letter of support for our Prize submission next week. We are asking for your commitment to continue to support our activities as we work towards a community solar array proposal.

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

We are not asking for a commitment to any specific project or action at this time. The letter is intended to demonstrate that we've kept the Select Board informed of activities we've been doing for the Prize, usually through our monthly reports. The three main activities reflected in this letter:

- Community outreach in the form of Home Energy Assessments.
 - Initial interaction with a microgrid developer, to help us plan a resilience hub.
 - Working with the IESC to figure out some kind of solar ownership model that would help us be able to access federal grants. Exploring the feasibility of a quasi-municipal corporation for owning or investing in local solar projects, to support economic development on Islesboro.
- We look forward to updating you on our final report.
 - Kizzi encouraged everyone to take the Home Energy Survey if they haven't done so already.

MOTION BY P. Anderson, seconded by M. Burns, to approve signing the letter. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Continue out of order.

Update to Select Board on Town Bank Accounts—Brian Bohanon, Finance Director

- Memo in packet outlines the steps he has taken.
- Brian has been working with Camden National Bank to increase the interest rate that we get paid for all of our unspent cash that is at CNB, which is where the majority of our funds are. The rest are in Capital Reserve with an investment advisor.
- We were getting paid very little compared to what current market rates were offering. Our checking accounts were paying 0.03%, our high-yield savings was at 1.81%. Brian negotiated higher rates based on the funds we have and the funds we expect later on. They were very excited about all the bond and grant proceeds we will be receiving for the Municipal Building Project.
- They agreed to increase the interest rate on all of our accounts to 4%.
- The Board thanked Brian with a round of applause.

MOTION BY L. Bruce, seconded by M. Burns, to return to the order of the Agenda. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

SEA LEVEL RISE

S. Conover reported that the Sea Level Rise Committee just submitted another grant for the Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund for \$75,000 to continue engineering work at the Narrows. We held an info meeting last night that was well attended on Zoom. Next info meeting will be July 9th at 4:00 at the Library. Another info meeting at the Up-Island Church on the 10th at 4:30. The next SLR Committee meeting will be on the 12th

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

to discuss the adaptation recommendation that we're going to bring to the Select Board on the 17th. S. Conover will circulate info before that SB meeting, and is happy to meet with anyone who is looking for additional information. We are likely to recommend a phased approach that will include raising the road and making improvements to the revetments. The price tag for Phase I is between \$3 and \$4.5M. Some alternatives may be more fundable via grants. Phase II would be a longer-term bridge solution, closer to \$23M. More information coming.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING PROJECT

L. Bruce stated she doesn't have much to report today. Please take a look at progress. Meeting with supervisor Pete McPhearson and Pete Anderson next Wednesday. Still trying to nail down who will do the construction on the Up-Island Public Safety Garage.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- Planning Board: July 15th, 5:00pm.
- Energy Committee: July 9th, 5:15pm.
- SLR Committee: July 9th, 4:00pm., July 10th, 4:30, July 12th, 1:00pm.

P. Anderson gave an update on the Islesboro Municipal Broadband meeting of last week. Discussion about the upcoming contract, which is still in negotiation. Page has had no dialogue with GWI as to there being any potential disruptions. Major changes:

- They removed language related to startup/build (installation/testing). No longer relevant.
- GWI requests that our contract looks more uniform with other municipalities.
- Inserted mechanism to ensure cost of labor/materials is competitive.
- Simplified invoicing for Tina.
- Asked for reduced price, GWI cut bandwidth fee 15%, approx. \$10k savings.
- Insurance limits/indemnification. We asked for increased umbrella coverage (under review) in case of incidents.
- If GWI gets sold, we have an option to opt-out with no fee if we decide the new provider doesn't work for us.
- One item left to work on: GWI can authorize whoever they want to perform work, but the Town can request info about potential contractors. It is noted in the contract that the town has a preference for qualified local contractors.
- This would be a 10-year contract.
- Draft will hopefully be ready for Select Board review within four weeks.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Packet included Agenda for 7/3/24 and Minutes of 6/18/24 Select Board Meeting.

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

- Patrick Lyons, Esq. of Eaton Peabody is requesting feedback as to why the Board decided to go with Preti Flaherty.
 - S. Conover will draft a letter. We were all confident that he would have served us well. Should we have the opportunity to work together in the future, he would be good legal counsel.
- Committee Minutes:
 - None.
- Correspondence
 - Rick Lattimer, North Haven Administrator, request to Select Board to sign a joint letter from all the islands to Gov. Mills to keep the pressure on her to solve the Ferry Service staffing issues.
 - Cressica Brazier, Rural Energy Prize Final Report letter of support.
 - Frank Start email. Received over the weekend. Not on the agenda.
 - This is the first time the Select Board has been made aware of the situation. S. Conover recognized that Frank is anxious to find resolution, and to get connected to broadband. She feels she needs to do more research to understand the issue before we have a conversation.
 - J. Anderson has reached out to Mark Bower to provide background information. Then we can find an appropriate time for a thorough conversation to find the best path forward.
 - Frank requests to be alerted if any part of that is going to be discussed in a public meeting.
 - Janet asked Frank to bring to the Board a list of all topics of concern that he would like the Select Board to address.
- Bar Harbor Wealth Management Capital Reserve account statement 6/30/24.
- Warrants FY24 #26A and FY25 #1

OLD BUSINESS

1. New Town Counsel Hired—Kristin Collins of Preti Flaherty.
 - S. Conover.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Lessons Learned from Town Meeting—Steve Pendleton.
 - Steve distributed a 20-question draft for a survey to go out to residents.
 - Email feedback/suggestions. Steve will get it to J. Anderson next week.
 - J. Anderson stated that Tina Pendleton hasn't done Survey Monkey.
 - M. Burns volunteered to help create survey. Wednesday deadline.
 - Out by Friday, July 12th. Steve stated people are likely to respond T-Th.
2. Special Town Meeting
 - August 1st, possible date. Discussion about possible August 24th date.
 - Send School Board guidance about what we need for timeline.

Islesboro Select Board
Regular Meeting
Town Office Meeting Room & via Zoom
Wednesday, July 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

- The next School Board meeting is July 22nd. They are aiming to have a public info meeting the week of the 29th, and to present to the Select Board on July 31st.
- Maggie felt Bill Stockmeyer's explanation was confusing, and suggested meeting with the Town attorney. S. Conover stated she can meet with attorney next week.

APPROVE WARRANTS: FY24 #26A, FY25 #1

MOTION BY M. Burns, seconded by P. Anderson, to approve Warrants FY24 #26A and FY25 #1. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no.

APPOINTMENTS:

Housing Committee: Susan West, and Islesboro Municipal Broadband: Trevor Blackford

MOTION BY L. Bruce, seconded by P. Anderson, to appoint Susan West to the Housing Committee and Trevor Blackford to the Islesboro Municipal Broadband Committee. No discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no.

CHAIR COMMENTS

S. Conover: Thank you all for hanging in.

VICE-CHAIR COMMENTS

L. Bruce: No comments.

INDIVIDUAL SELECT BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

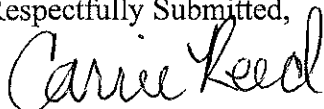
P. Anderson: Stay safe this weekend.

M. Burns: 10 fingers, 10 toes.

S. Pendleton: Have a great Fourth.

MOTION BY M. Burns, seconded by L. Bruce, to Adjourn Meeting at 7:45 PM. No Discussion. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed
Secretary

