



## Lamoine Select Board

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### Minutes – December 15, 2022

Chair Jo Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Present were: Select Board members Nathan Mason, Larissa Thomas, Gary McFarland, S. Josephine Cooper; Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, Assessors Jane Fowler & Brian Thomas. Select Board member Kathleen Rybarz had informed the Board she was unable to attend (she was visiting with her newborn grandson!).

**Agenda Review/Addendum** – Jo noted the Assessors were present and scheduled high in the agenda.

**Minutes – December 1, 2022** – Stu noted that Larissa sent some minor clarifications and corrections which he has entered. Larissa moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Expenditure Warrant 13** – The Board signed the warrant in the amount of \$162,492.18. Stu reported he would have to move about \$250,000 from investments to cover this warrant and the next one.

**Cash & Budget Reports** – Stu said the printed report was passed out with materials for this evening. He said things are where they ought to be at this time of year.

**Foreclosure Notices** – Stu reported that notices were sent for 7 properties that have unpaid liens from 2020/21. He said two have already been paid, three others are owned by the same parties, and one has requested an installment payment plan which is on the addendum.

**Meeting with Board of Assessors regarding transition** – Board of Assessors Chair Jane Fowler asked if the Select Board had questions for the assessors. Nathan said he was saddened to see things go this way (referring to replacing the elected board with an appointed assessor as voted in November 2022). Mrs. Fowler said she couldn't say she hasn't loved the work. She said she has enjoyed being part of the Board of Assessors for more than 30-years but everyone on the board is getting older and there doesn't seem to be anyone willing to take on the responsibilities.

Jo said she is sure that the assessors have gained a lot of knowledge over the years. Assessor Brian Thomas said it would be impossible for someone new to walk into the job cold. He said he had drafted a request for proposals prior to the November vote. He said there are a number of ways to format such a document. He said he based it on what's required of assessors by the State of Maine. He said the Assessors had reviewed a quarter of the properties each year in the past, but a full revaluation is under way, and the quarter review probably won't be necessary for a few years.

Mr. Thomas said the town might seek a 3-to-4 year contract, and if the town is satisfied with the hired assessor, the contract could be renewed, and if a change is needed, a new bid could be sought. Mrs. Fowler said the person or company hired would be the

assessor and deal with everything. Stu noted that processing abatement requests was not included in the draft RFP. Mr. Thomas said he didn't specifically list all the requirements. Mrs. Fowler said the new assessor would also have to prepare state reports. Mr. Thomas said a qualified assessor would know the requirements.

Stu asked if the Assessors had a suggestion for when to start advertising. A brief discussion followed. Larissa said there would have to be some overlap time, and it would be best to get the request out as soon as possible for the July 1, 2023 start date.

Mrs. Fowler said the current Assessing Board members would be available to answer questions from the new Assessor. Stu asked how the two boards would like to process applications. Gary asked who would interview potential candidates. Stu said the Select Board would want to interview and input from the current Board of Assessors would be valuable. Mr. Thomas said the Board of Assessors would like to review the applications. He said the RFP is not specific; applicants could be individuals or employees of an assessing company. He said details of how to implement the transition could be handled during the interview process.

Jo said she appreciates the Board of Assessors' willingness to answer questions after their terms expire. A brief discussion followed regarding editing the RFP. The Board of Assessors plans to meet on January 4, 2023 and the Select Board meets the next evening.

**Seaweed Harvesting** – Gary asked if it was some kind of forklift that had been parked at Marlboro Beach. A brief discussion followed. Stu reported he became aware of the issue when the Parks Commission contacted him about the machine being parked in a vegetated area that they were hoping to restore.

Larissa thanked CEO Rebecca Albright for her work and noted the machine has been removed. She said the company that was loading seaweed at Marlboro Beach seemed to lack awareness of the revegetation effort and park rules. She said there still were mesh storage bags at the beach. She said the Conservation Commission will further discuss better stewardship of Marlboro Beach. She said the Commission is not against commercial fishing.

Nathan asked if there had been any communication with the harvesting company. Larissa said CEO Albright met with a company representative at the beach, but Larissa didn't know if there had been any discussion regarding best practices. She said the CEO was told that the company was finishing operations and would not be back for at least 3-years.

Jo said she read the various e-mails regarding the situation and asked about the communications process. Larissa said she received an e-mail from the Parks Commission chair and went to the beach and saw the machinery. She said she sent an e-mail to the CEO. Jo said she is concerned that some of the back and forth e-mails should be discussed in a public meeting.

Jo said she is also concerned that communication coming from individual Select Board members is potentially an improper route. Larissa asked how such an incident should be channeled to the proper town staff. Stu said the perception was that the direction to a staff member was coming from an individual Select Board member instead of the full board, and that leads to potential problems. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the chain of communications and the Freedom of Access Act, and a desire to let the seaweed harvesting company know what the expectations are at Marlboro Beach. Larissa said any communication from the Conservation Commission would be sent to the Select Board for approval. Nathan said the LCC is not barred from sending a letter to the company stating the goals at Marlboro Beach. A brief discussion followed regarding communications and harvesting rockweed in general.

**Community Resilience Action Grant** – Larissa said a draft RFP will be updated. She reported that both she and Stu attended a webinar by Efficiency Maine which has offered increased incentives for small municipality heat pump projects. She said that would allow the town to get even more mileage from the \$50,000 grant. She said the RFP will be updated to target qualified partners which will allow the town to apply for the Efficiency Maine grant/rebate program. She said she is attending a Community Action Grant kickoff webinar tomorrow and will provide a revised RFP before the next meeting. A brief discussion followed regarding types of heat pump systems.

Nathan inquired about stating that the proposals are capped at \$50,000 and concern that it could artificially inflate costs. Stu reported that he has placed an article on the town meeting warrant to potentially utilize the Hodgkins Trust in case of over runs. Nathan asked what happens if the full grant is not expended. Stu said generally the state will only reimburse what was actually spent.

Jo asked about timing. Larissa said she hopes to have more next meeting.

**Versant Power Pole Permit** – Nathan moved to approve a permit for a pole on Shore Road. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.** Jo signed the permit application.

**Lamoine Committee on Aging** – Jo said the meeting planned for last week was postponed until tomorrow. Stu said the CTV operations manager had scheduled the meeting for the TV channel. Jo said that was OK. She said the committee hopes to meet with representative from Sullivan in January and the Lamoine Little Children's group in February.

**Facilities and Infrastructure Committee** – Stu reported the School Committee has asked the Brett Jones be appointed. Nathan said he is willing to represent the Select Board. Jo said any member of the Select Board could do it. Stu cautioned that it would be better to have the same person at the meetings for continuity instead of a revolving representative. A brief discussion followed. Larissa nominated Nathan to represent the Select Board. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.** Larissa nominated Brett Jones to the Committee, representing the School Committee. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

After a brief discussion it was decided that the initial meeting would be on Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 6PM, prior to the Select Board meeting.

[Town Meeting 2023](#) – The Board received a draft warrant for the March 2023 town meeting in material distributed prior to the meeting. Stu reviewed articles with changes from previous years. Gary reported that he was asked how the article regarding a zoning change for Map 13 Lot 50 came back to the warrant. There was a brief discussion where it was noted that at a prior meeting Mr. Crawford met with the Board and the Board voted to include the article. Stu noted that the Planning Board will likely have to hold a public hearing as this would change the Shoreland Zoning Map.

Budget – Stu noted the Budget Committee met and approved recommendations on Monday. He said Jo was in attendance. He said the budget is up sharply and he was a bit surprised that the Budget Committee didn't push back much.

Citizen of the Year – Stu said he distributed a memo in the material this evening suggesting a Citizen of the Year that he's had in mind for several months. After reviewing the nomination Nathan moved and Jo 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve the nomination. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

Town Report – Stu reported he's not had a chance to get going on the report yet and inquired about a cover photo. A picture of the ospreys in their nest was suggested, as well as the bell from the town hall now on display at the school.

Lamoine Quarterly – Stu said he's drafted the first page of the January 2023 Quarterly. He said he hopes to have a full draft to the Board via e-mail between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Mayor's Monarch Pledge – Larissa said she sent materials via e-mail to the board this morning so that they would have them ahead of the meeting. She explained the monarch butterfly program, which would encourage habitat creation and education efforts. She said the [Conservation Commission](#) voted on ten things it would like to do, including partnering with the school. She said the first step was to ask the town to approve engagement. She said she was hoping that could happen now so that things could get ready for the spring.

Stu asked if individual residents could get information on establishing a butterfly garden. Larissa said they've collected milkweed seeds and hope to distribute seeds and gardening information. Jo said she thought this was a great idea. Larissa said the Conservation Commission hoped to establish a milkweed garden area at the town hall, transfer station and school.

Jo moved to approve pledge participation in the program. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. Nathan said he was just seeing the information tonight and before he approved of pledging something he wants to read it. He said he's not opposed, but he is just seeing this for the first time. A brief discussion followed. Larissa noted that a Conservation Commission member was also initially concerned until he learned about the program and now supports it. She

noted that Trenton has adopted the program, and she has talked with representative of that town. She said the program is entirely voluntary and is an awareness raising effort. She said the plight of the monarch is a nationwide issue, and such programs sometimes get media attention, and it's something the town can rally around. Jo said she liked that all ages can get involved. **Vote in favor was 3-0 (Mason abstained).**

**Request for Installment Agreement** – Stu reported the owner of Map 20 Lot 5 received a foreclosure notice from the town and has written to request an installment agreement. He said he's drafted a letter from the board explaining that such an agreement would not take place until such time as the property actually forecloses, and that the board is reluctant to enter such agreements because of the potential jeopardy it can place both the town and the taxpayer in. Nathan moved to sign the letter from the Board. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Computer Storage** – Stu reportage that installation of the NAS computer file storage system is now complete and thanked tech committee member Bob Lachance for his work on making that possible. He said the data was moved over on Monday evening, and he spent much of the next two days pointing the various computers in the building to the transferred files. He said the next project will be to convert the offsite storage program to the NAS unit which will be more expensive but come from the technology fund.

**Comments** – Stu reported the planned holiday schedule for the town hall was to close at noon on Friday December 23<sup>rd</sup> which is the usual Christmas Eve closure time, as well as on the federal holidays of December 26 and January 2, 2023.

**Next Meetings** – The Board will sign warrant 14 sometime around December 29, 2022 and have regular meetings in 2023 on January 5 & 19, February 2 & 16 and March 2. The town meeting election is March 7, the open town meeting March 15<sup>th</sup> and the organizational meeting on March 16.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst. to the Select Board