



Lamoine Select Board

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Minutes – April 6, 2023

Chair Larissa Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present were: Select Board members S. Josephine Cooper, Nathan Mason, Larissa Thomas, Gary McFarland, Kathleen Rybarz; Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, Planning Board chair John Holt, School Committee members Brett Jones, Gordon Donaldson; Assessor Brian Thomas, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee Secretary Kimberly Martens (briefly), Frederick Stocking and Sabrina Jordan

Agenda Review/Addendum – Larissa said she would like to accommodate those in the audience by moving the Assessing RFP and Facilities & Infrastructure items further up the agenda. There was no objection.

Minutes – March 6, 2023 – Larissa said she sent some minor edits to Stu who said he has incorporated those. Jo moved to approve as edited. Kathleen 2nd. **Vote in favor was 3-0 (Mason, McFarland abstained).**

Expenditure Warrant 21 – Stu said a majority of the board signed the warrant on March 23, 2023 for \$185,462.00. Larissa asked about the Dave's World payment. Stu said that he booked it as \$50,000 to the Community Action Grant and the remaining \$10,444 to an account receivable in anticipation of the rebate from Efficiency Maine.

Expenditure Warrant 22 – The Board signed the warrant in the amount of \$123,525.81.

Cash & Budget Reports – Stu noted that expenditures are very close to the percentage of the year passed.

Excise Tax Quarterly Report – Stu said he was a bit surprised the amount collected in the 1st quarter of 2023 was higher than the previous year. He said 2nd quarter is typically the highest quarter of the year, so the town should make budget.

Checking Account Reconciliation – The Board signed the statement expressing satisfaction with review of the checking account reconciliation for March 2023. Jo noted that an outstanding check to her has been lost. Stu said he would re-cut the check.

Assessing RFP – Stu reported the town received two bids for assessing services for 3-years. He said the Board of Assessors met yesterday and reviewed them and recommend RJD Appraisal's submission. Gary moved to accept the RJD proposal. Kathleen 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Facilities & Infrastructure – Brett Jones (School & Facilities & Infrastructure Committee Chair), said a for sale sign was spotted on a piece of property, and the Facilities & Infrastructure Committee has not had a chance to talk about it yet. He said it's a 37-acre parcel that's for sale. He said the town does not have a lot of space, and it's rare to see large parcels. He said the property is owned by the family of the late John Smith, and the listing price is \$350,000.

Planning Board Chair John Holt passed out a sketch showing the property which sits adjacent to parcels currently held by the town on which the salt/sand shed and transfer station are located. He said there is about 2,000 feet of road frontage and it would create an 85 acre parcel, and if a strip owned by Doug Gott & Sons were acquired, that would create about 100-acres owned by the town. He said he's not sure the opportunity for acquisition would come up often, and it deserves a discussion before the town. He noted there is a gravel mining lease on the property held by Gott. He said the lease expires in 2028, the gravel permit for the Smith lot expires in 2024 and could be renewed for 3-years. He said he wanted to advocate for serious consideration of the purchase.

Gordon Donaldson said the town did the right thing many years ago by holding onto the parcels it owns in that neighborhood. A brief discussion followed on previous land acquisition attempts. Mr. Jones suggested if acquired, the house lots could be sold. Jo asked if the income from the lease would go to the town if purchased. Mr. Holt said that depends on whether the lease goes with the property. A brief discussion followed.

Nathan asked if any disclosures have come from the listing agent. There was a brief discussion about gravel permit requirements. Jo asked what the steps would be to acquire the land. Mr. Holt said he would imagine the town would approach the seller as a possible buyer. Mr. Jones suggested reaching out to the seller to see if they would give the town time to make a decision. Larissa asked how to go about that. Stu suggested that the town attorney should be involved in the initial negotiations. Fred Stocking, a retired attorney, said there could be an option to purchase while the town looked for grants. Mr. Jones said it would be best to put this before the town. Mr. Stocking said there should be town approval before signing an option. Mr. Donaldson noted the Facilities & Infrastructure Committee continues to meet. Mr. Jones said the committee will issue a report.

Nathan said he's typically not in favor of buying lots of land and taking it off the tax rolls, but this case he does favor it. He said there are potential water quality issues, but he didn't think this should wait for the committee to recommend it. Kathleen moved to consult with the town attorney and explore seeking an option to purchase with the owner. Jo 2nd. After a brief discussion, the **Vote in favor was 5-0**.

Stu reported he attended a recent seminar with the Maine Town City & County Management Association and there is a lot of federal money available for infrastructure projects. Larissa moved to pursue federal grants for a project. Gary 2nd. There was no vote taken.

School-Sprinkler System – Mr. Jones reported nothing new on the sprinkler/fire pump issue. He said they should have some numbers by the next meeting.

Solar Energy Projects – Larissa explained that the board has to make a couple of decisions in order to move forward. One is whether one array or two arrays are desired (one at the salt/sand shed, one at the school), and whether the town would want to buy the facilities after six years. She said she would recommend that the town proceed

with both arrays and the purchase agreement plan. She said there are better discounts if the town proceeds with both arrays with the purchase plan. Nathan asked what the rate difference might be. A brief discussion followed. Larissa moved to proceed with both projects with a 6-year buyout option. Kathleen 2nd. A brief discussion followed on whether the school is on board. Larissa reported they were, as she met with the school committee in March. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Road Projects – Stu outlined three projects so far for the spring, two on Buttermilk and one on MacQuinn. Nathan moved to authorize Stu to arrange for completion. Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Heat Pump Update – Stu reported that Dave’s World should be starting soon on the town hall and fire station, but will wait until school dismisses for the year before starting that project. Larissa said she’s concerned with how to report the initial payment on the Community Action Grant report due on April 15th. She said she would meet with Stu to work that out.

Facilities & Infrastructure Committee – Nathan said the consensus from the committee is to tackle the school first, address parking at the town hall, and then the fire station. He said the committee is waiting for further information from Oak Point Associates.

Committee on Aging – Jo said the committee meets next on the 14th at 1PM. She said they’re getting a mixture of ages, and met with the Girl Scouts who will be holding a talent show in June at the Grange. She said a Facebook page is up and running. She said there are another couple of people interested in serving. She said the committee seems focused on social events, resource identification, and volunteer opportunities.

Abatement Request – Nathan moved to approve two years of tax abatements for Bruce Yasgur (Map 5 Lot 2) who was assessed for a septic system that apparently does not exist on the lot. The total abatement was \$170.47. Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Lamoine Quarterly – Stu said the Lamoine Quarterly has been edited with suggestions sent by the Board. He said he would send it to print tomorrow.

Water Filter Agreement – Jo moved to sign the agreement with Angela Balacco. Gary 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

PERC Rates – Stu noted the rates for trash incineration are going up by a little over 6% per ton.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes – Stu reported the town received \$1,000 from Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Jo moved to allocate the revenue to the Conservation Commission. Kathleen 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Request for Funding – American Legion Post 8 (Cherryfield) – There was no objection to having Stu send a letter to the organization explaining the outside agency funding process.

Maine Housing Homeowner Assistance Program – The board studied a sheet from Maine Housing regarding assistance with back taxes. Stu said he thinks the town might have to enroll in the program for people to use it. He said he would check on it. There was discussion about providing the information to taxpayers.

Animal Control Officer – Stu reported Hancock County has hired a regional ACO, and a Memorandum of Understanding needs to be signed to proceed with using the service. Larissa moved to approve the MOU, Jo 2nd. **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

Road Sweeping – Stu noted the Maine DOT has been sweeping the roads all week, and it looks like they swept some of the town roads. He said he would check with TGP Enterprises, as they hold the contract for 2023 for the local roads.

Heating Fuel – Stu reported that No Frills Oil had contacted him regarding whether the town wanted to lock in fuel prices. After a brief discussion the Board requested that Stu work with the School Department on putting heating fuel out to bid.

Request from Terry Towne – The board reviewed a memorandum from Mr. Towne in regard to a living quarters in a garage on Map 14 Lot 28. Stu said the matter went before the Board of Appeals which ruled Mr. Towne had no standing to bring the complaint. Larissa said it seems impossible to verify some of the information alleged by Mr. Towne. Gary said the matter seems to go back many years.

Jo said she would support the Code Enforcement Officer's actions. Stu said it would be helpful to look at this and remove the personalities from the case. He asked how the Board would like to respond to Mr. Towne. Larissa said she was not sure what Mr. Towne was requesting. Stu said the letter is asking that the CEO revisit her decision on the initial complaint. Jo said it appears she has. Kathleen noted that state laws changed and redefined dwelling units sometime in the 1990s. She said this is in the Shoreland Zone.

Stu said no one on the current staff was around in 1990 when it was noted on the assessing card that a living quarters was located in the garage. He said that appears to have been conditionally permitted. Nathan said that notation is on the property card. Kathleen said it would no longer be a permitted use. She said the touchy thing is the kitchen. She said as long as there is no stove, the situation would appear to be legal. A discussion followed.

The board asked that a letter be prepared for the Board to send to Mr. Towne, thanking him for bringing it to their attention and they are satisfied with the CEO's response. Nathan said he's still not clear on what the issue is. The Board asked that a letter be ready for the next meeting.

Goals – The Board discussed what it hoped to accomplish beyond the usual routine matters for the next year. Jo said she would like to get input from the existing boards and committee so that coordinated thinking is accomplished. Kathleen said she'd like to look at whether larger scale development ties in with the Comprehensive Plan.

Jo said Lamoine is doing well on ageism issues. She said there is a healthy community involvement in the school, and on town committees. She said the board should keep an eye on the Comprehensive Plan and follow through.

Larissa said she'd like to look 10-years down the road and see what future growth changes might lie ahead. She said future growth constantly changes and things degrade. Kathleen said she's received calls on the proposed "glamp—ground". She said it would be helpful if people looked at ordinances and understood how they work. Sabrina Jordan said she was present because she doesn't understand how much of the town works. She said an educational meeting to explain how each board works might be helpful. Jo said such a thing could happen. Mrs. Jordan asked if a resort such as the proposed glamping project will affect where the town goes in the future. A lengthy discussion followed.

Kathleen suggested some orientation sessions might be good. Jo said topical discussions held at the school might be educational. Kathleen offered to look at the Comprehensive Plan and make a list of what needs doing. Nathan said the discussion can continue.

Other Business – Stu reported the Town of Sorrento has approached him to seek advice on how things work in Lamoine. He said he would meet with his counterpart in Sorrento on April 18th. He also advised that he will be out of the office next Tuesday (April 11th) to teach the tax lien class in Augusta.

Comments – Jo said she was pleased to have Mrs. Jordan as an audience. Larissa said she and Mrs. Jordan both ran in the very wet and cold Flattop 5K last weekend.

Next Meetings – After much discussion, the board agreed to meet on Monday nights though June, as Thursdays presented a conflict. The next meeting will be on April 24, then May 8, May 22, June 12 and June 26. Stu said he would adjust the calendar in the Lamoine Quarterly.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst. to the Select Board