

BOARD OF SELECTMEN - TOWN OF MACHIAS

MARCH 23, 2016

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Machias Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Aubrey Carter. In attendance were Board members Warren Gay, James Whalen, Leslie Haynes, and Josh Rolfe; Town Manager Christina Therrien; Secretary Cathy Lord; Johanna Billings, Jill Daviero, Aaron Dudley, Paul Trovarello, Donald Lord.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Warren Gay, seconded by Josh Rolfe, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2016 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Warren Gay, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board

VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #75 in the amount of \$14,907.30; to approve municipal warrant #76 in the amount of \$319,114.06; to approve municipal warrant #77 in the amount of \$15,397.38; and, to approve municipal warrant #78 in the amount of \$65,433.72 .

On a motion by Warren Gay, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board

VOTED:

To approve school warrant #38 in the amount of \$201,599.62 .

3. APPOINTMENT PAPERS FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

On a motion by Josh Rolfe, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board

VOTED:

To appoint William Burke, Amy Marsh, Sandi Malagara, Barbara Anthony, Rich Bard, Kehben Grier, Deb Sternbergh, Katherine Holmes, Garret Lee, Eric Jones, Danny Manchester, Dan Gardner, Melvin Adams, Gerard NeCastro, Nancy Crowley, and Lee Downing to the Machias Downtown Revitalization Committee.

The Board signed the appointment papers for the members of the downtown revitalization committee.

4. TRANZON AUCTION REPRESENTATIVE - DISCUSSION OF SALE OF TOWN PROPERTIES

Ms. Therrien introduced Ms. Jill Daviero, Senior Vice President of Tranzon Auction Properties, who spoke to the Board regarding services offered by her auction company. She explained that Tranzon Auction (located in Portland, Maine) is involved in disposal

of assets by individuals, banks, estates, and some municipalities. Ms. Daviero distributed a sample property information pamphlet which illustrated her company's services to interested parties. She explained that she was a licensed real estate broker and that Tranzon Auction is a licensed auction company.

Ms. Daviero advised the Board that her company tries to adhere to a thirty day window when offering properties and that there is usually a thirty to forty-five day time period to close a sale. She explained that if a property is not sold the company asks for a \$1500. service fee and if the property is sold there is usually a straight commission of 7% and a buyer's premium (paid by the buyer). Mr. Carter inquired as to what the typical budget to sell a property looks like? Ms. Daviero explained that the standard budget is in the \$3800. to \$3900. range. Mr. Carter noted that the Town has attempted to sell the telebusiness center several times with no success. Mr. Carter asked about the practice of setting a reserve on a property; Ms. Daviero explained that a reserve can be set, either published or unpublished, dependent on the seller's choice.

Mr. Carter noted that there are currently tenants in the upstairs portion of the telebusiness building who would have a concern about people accessing the second floor. Ms. Daviero noted that her company is sensitive to these concerns. She added that auctions are usually held on the site of the property and that structured times are set up for showing the property to prospective bidders. Ms. Daviero explained that properties are usually sold "as is, where is" with no guarantees.

Ms. Daviero distributed copies of proposed contracts for the Board to review. She noted that she puts together advertisements for the sale of the property and publishes notices containing auction information. Mr. Carter informed Ms. Daviero that the Board of Selectmen would be prepared at their next scheduled meeting to make a formal decision about the sale of the telebusiness center; Mr. Carter invited Ms. Daviero to return on April 13th to discuss the Board's decision.

Mr. Carter informed Ms. Daviero that the Town of Machias currently owns 46% of the municipal water company stock and that the shares are valued at approximately \$400,000. He explained that the Board is interested in disposing of the ownership shares and he asked Ms. Daviero if her company is involved in selling these types of stock. Ms. Daviero explained that she would have to gather information within her company to ascertain if the company handles the sale of these types of assets; she noted that she would have an answer to this question on the following day after she discusses the topic with her associates.

Mr. Carter thanked Ms. Daviero for attending the Board meeting.

## 5. ADDICTION RECOVERY INC. PRESENTATION

Mr. Aaron Dudley and Mr. Paul Trovarello introduced themselves as representatives of the Machias Christian Fellowship. Mr. Dudley advised the Board that he is the pastor of the group and that there is a drug addiction meeting every Monday night at the former Kennebec Baptist Church. He explained that the fellowship runs a drug rehabilitation program at a house located at 11 Lincoln Street for twelve residents. Mr. Dudley told the Board about the drug rehab program at the facility and the typical day for the residents of the rehab facility.

Mr. Dudley advised the Board that the biggest issue of the program is its expense; he noted that by August 15th the group needs to raise \$8000. to purchase the property at 11 Lincoln Street (owned by Ed Pellon). Mr. Dudley noted that the goal of the program is to help addicts to recover and lead a productive life; he added that faith based rehabilitation programs have proven to be highly successful.

Mr. Carter commented that the goals of the program are highly needed in the area. Ms. Therrien suggested that she could assist the group with finding grants available for such programs. Mr. Carter noted that the Board could think about adding a separate warrant article to the town meeting warrant asking the taxpayers to fund \$1000. for the program. The other members of the Board acknowledged that these type of programs are a worthy cause.

#### 6. GARBAGE CLEAN-UP DAY

The Board discussed scheduling a free garbage day at the transfer station. Mr. Whalen noted that community and university groups could be involved and that this would be an opportunity to spruce up the appearance of the town. Mr. Rolfe commented that a free dump day is a good idea. Mr. Carter recommended that the event be heavily advertised.

Mr. Haynes pointed out that there is a major trash problem on Hudson Boulevard. Members of the Board noted other areas in Machias in need of a clean-up. Ms. Therrien said that that owners of property that have accumulated trash can be directly advised of the clean-up day. Mr. Rolfe suggested that the clean-up be scheduled for a weekend. Ms. Therrien suggested the weekend of May 7th/8th to the Board. Members of the Board agreed with scheduling the event on this weekend for Machias residents only. Ms. Therrien told the Board that she would advertise the event along with a note that if someone needs any help they can contact the town office.

#### 7. RECOMMENDATION ON ACQUISITION OF TOWN CREDIT CARD

Ms. Therrien explained that the Town does not have a credit card it can use for purchases; she noted that there are times when a credit card is really needed for purchases when there is no time to cut a town check. She recommended that the Town obtain a credit card for use when needed. The Board discussed Ms. Therrien's request.

On a motion by Josh Rolfe, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board  
VOTED:

To authorize the Town Manager to obtain a credit card for the Town of Machias with a limit of \$5000.

#### 8. BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL COMMITTEE - ROAD CLOSING

Ms. Therrien explained that she discussed with Chief Dwelley the suggestion by the chairman of the Blueberry Festival Committee to allow diagonal parking for vendors on Court Street on the weekend of the festival. She noted that Chief Dwelley pointed out that there is a safety issue for emergency vehicles having adequate room to pass through if vehicles are parking diagonally. It was suggested that vehicles could park on the sides

of Court Street/Bruce Street. Mr. Haynes said that he could have the parking area for the North Street church opened up for vendor parking. Mr. Rolfe said that the Board should defer to the expertise of the Chief of Police since the police will be in charge of security during the festival. The Board agreed not to allow diagonal parking but instead to recommend that vendors park in the North Street church parking lot and also they can park parallel on one side of Court Street from Center Street to Bruce Street; Ms. Therrien said that she would inform Ellen Farnsworth of the Board's decision. Mr. Haynes pointed out that these two options for parking would leave plenty of room for emergency vehicles.

## 9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Whalen gave a brief update on his discussions with potential members of the economic development committee.

## 10. TAX ACQUIRED PROPERTY UPDATE

Ms. Therrien advised the members of the Board that Donald Lord had contacted her regarding the foreclosed property located at 38 West Street and that he was in attendance to speak with the Board about the property that he owns jointly with other siblings. Mr. Carter asked Mr. Lord what was the reason for not paying the property taxes in a timely manner and Mr. Lord responded that there is a "family dispute" and that he is willing to pay up to date his portion of the taxes owed on the property. Mr. Carter pointed out that legal notices were sent out warning that the property would be foreclosed upon if property taxes were not paid by a given date. Mr. Carter noted that there may be legal ramifications to consider in rescinding a foreclosure. He noted that property owners are allowed a finite amount of time to pay their property taxes and that the Town mails out legal notices advising property owners that their property will be forfeited if taxes remain unpaid.

Ms. Therrien commented that she had been advised that the Board had made payment arrangements in the past for property owners delinquent in paying their property taxes. Mr. Carter noted that in the past payment arrangements had been negotiated before actual foreclosures, never afterwards. The Board directed the Town Manager to contact an attorney as to proper legal steps after a foreclosure has been completed. Mr. Carter noted that the Board does not want to set a precedence on rescinding foreclosures; he noted that all taxpayers are allowed a certain amount of time to settle their tax bills before the Town utilizes legal means to take property due to non-payment of property taxes.

Ms. Therrien advised the Board that the other piece of foreclosed property located at 24 Gardner Avenue has been secured and that she will develop an ad for the sale of this property. The Board discussed having the Town Manager contact the former owner of the property in order to advise her of the need to remove personal property from the site.

## 11. AMBULANCE BILLING UPDATE

Mr. Whalen said that the Town needs to think about doing its own ambulance billing. Ms. Therrien noted that there is a need to have a person trained in medical coding and

billing perform the work. The Board discussed problems surrounding the billing of ambulance accounts. Ms. Therrien suggested that she can contact the present billing entity to discuss the billing situation and the services that are provided to Machias. It was noted that there is approximately \$200,000. in uncollected ambulance billing at the present time. Ms. Therrien told the Board that she would advise them of her findings.

## 12. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Ms. Therrien advised the members of the Board that she has provided them with copies of the following reports: a notice on a USDA rural development workshop in Machias, a list of third party requests, a monthly operations report for the wastewater treatment facility from Olver Associates, a copy of transfer station billings, and an e-mail regarding a backflow preventer at the wastewater treatment facility,

B. Ms. Therrien notified the Board that the auditors are here this week to work on the municipal audit. She noted that there will be a meeting with the school department to discuss the timeliness of getting the audit underway yearly by the end of October.

On a motion by Josh Rolfe, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM.