

BOARD OF SELECTMEN - TOWN OF MACHIAS

DECEMBER 10, 2014

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, Danny Manchester, Glenn Davis, and James Whalen; Town Manager Christopher Loughlin; Secretary Cathy Lord; Dean McGuire, Bob Berta.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2014 Board meeting.

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2014 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #42 in the amount of \$13,696.30; to approve municipal warrant #43 in the amount of \$10,590.28; to approve municipal warrant #44 in the amount of \$120,297.92; to approve municipal warrant #45 in the amount of \$24,291.53; to approve municipal warrant 46 in the amount of \$137,486.16; to approve municipal warrant 47 in the amount of \$12,878.41; to approve municipal warrant 48 in the amount of \$42,770.78; to approve municipal warrant 49 in the amount of \$19,622.63; and, to approve municipal warrant 50 in the amount of \$640,696.63 .

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board

VOTED:

To approve school warrant #22 in the amount of \$312,803.21 and to approve school warrant 24 in the amount of \$191,601.25 .

3. HOYTOWN PROPERTY BIDS

Mr. Loughlin reported that one bid was received in answer to a request for bids to sell a piece of property located at Map 17 Lot 22A on the Hoyttown Road taken by the Town for non-payment of taxes. He noted that the minimum bid for the property was \$2800. The bid was opened and read by Mr. Manchester.

Bid: Emily Donovan - S2810.00

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board

VOTED:

To sell the property located at Map 17 Lot 22A to Emily Donovan for S2810 and to issue a quit claim deed.

Mr. Loughlin noted that the balance of the bid is due within fourteen days prior to the issuance of a quit claim deed.

4. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PROPOSALS

A. Mr. Dean McGuire, representing the Machias Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, explained that the Chamber is in the process of conducting a search for a new executive director. He pointed out that this is a part-time position. Mr. McGuire proposed that a full-time position be created with the Town of Machias creating a half-time economic development position and the other half of the position being that of the chamber director. Mr. Davis asked if there was enough business to keep an economic developer busy in Machias? Mr. Loughlin responded that there probably was not enough activity for a full-time position; he noted that other towns routinely combine responsibilities and duties to create one position. Mr. Whalen asked about the Chamber's drive to get people to join; he noted that he had never been approached about joining the organization. Mr. Whalen said that he has looked at the railroad station and commented that this was not his vision of the future. He added that it was his opinion that the Town needs to be forward thinking and look to the future, not the past.

Mr. Carter pointed out that a full-time position would have to include the cost of employee benefits. He commented that the proposal was an interesting idea; he added that he thinks highly of the Chamber and would hate to lose it. Mr. Carter commented that another issue would be where to house this position since space is extremely limited in the town office. After discussing the topic at length, it was the consensus of the Board to take this proposal under advisement. Mr. Carter noted that the Town Manager will be communicating the Board's decision regarding the proposal when it is made.

B. Mr. McGuire explained to the Board that the Chamber is renting the building on Main Street for its office and he noted that the Chamber is thinking of other options since the building rent is very expensive as well as the cost to heat the building. He said that the Chamber is thinking about finishing the renovations to the railroad station as an option since the station could be used to house the Chamber office. Mr. McGuire estimated that the cost would be approximately thirty to fifty thousand dollars to finish the station. After discussing the pros and cons of the project, Mr. Carter suggested that the Chamber discuss obtaining a loan from a local bank to complete the project. Mr. McGuire agreed to look into the possibility of securing a loan. Mr. Carter asked that Mr. McGuire get back to the Board on the results.

5. ELAINE CALE SEWER ACCOUNTS

Mr. Loughlin advised the Board that he talked with Elaine Cale that morning who advised him that she hopes to sell a piece of property to enable her to pay more of the money she owes the Town for sewer charges at the trailer park.

Mr. Loughlin noted that thirty day notices have been sent out on overdue sewer charges.

6. SPECIAL PERMIT FOR CATERING PRIVILEGES OFF PREMISES

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board

VOTED:

To grant Skywalker's Bar and Grill a special permit for catering privileges off premises for a November 19th event at Bangor Savings Bank.

Mr. Loughlin advised the Board that they could delegate responsibility for signing these types of catering permits. He noted that other towns regularly do this. Mr. Carter pointed out that there are pros and cons with either the Board signing the permits or delegating the duty to another person. It was the consensus of the Board not to change the current procedure.

7. MACHIAS WASTEWATER SEWER CONNECTION AND DUMPING FEES

Mr. Loughlin explained that the Board had revised sewer connection and dumping fees effective 10/9/13 and that since this time there has been a steady drop in revenue. Mr. Manchester urged the Board to consider changing the fees since the Town is losing revenue. The Board directed Mr. Loughlin to research what other facilities are charging for these services as well as finding out exactly how much revenue has been lost since the fees were last revised.

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To table discussion of the sewer connection and dumping fees pending additional information.

8. CENTRAL MAINE PYROTECHNICS - FIREWORKS PROPOSAL

Mr. Loughlin reported that Central Maine Pyrotechnics has raised its contract fees and that Machias received a bill for \$6000. for Fourth of July fireworks with fifty percent of the fee now due. The Board discussed the possibility of sharing the cost of the fireworks with other area towns and the Board asked that Mr. Loughlin send out letters asking for participation.

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To authorize payment of two thousand dollars to Central Maine Pyrotechnics as down payment for the Fourth of July fireworks display.

9. WATER COMPANY PROPOSAL - DR. WHALEN

Mr. Whalen advised the other members of the Board that as a private citizen he had discussed ownership of the water company with an attorney; Mr. Whalen said that this attorney would be willing to represent the Town in pursuing ownership of the water company. The members of the Board discussed the pros and cons of municipal ownership of the water company. Mr. Carter requested that Mr. Loughlin contact the Maine Public Utilities Commission regarding the Town's request for the creation of two additional positions on the Machias Water Company's board of directors.

10. TIF COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Loughlin noted that the TIF Committee would be meeting on December 17th at 3:00 PM. Mr. Carter said that he thought it would be advantageous to have the entire membership of the Board of Selectmen at the TIF meetings during negotiations; he noted that it would be preferable to hear comments from all members of the Board during the discussions. He also pointed out that the Board needs more information from the State as to where the Town can use TIF funds.

On a motion by James Whelan, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To invite all the members of the Machias Board of Selectmen to TIF Committee meetings.

11. CHRISTMAS EVE - PROPOSAL TO CLOSE TOWN OFFICE AT NOON

Mr. Loughlin advised the Board that employees are asking for permission to close the Town Office on Christmas Eve December 24th at noon. He noted that the employees would use vacation time for the afternoon hours.

On a motion by Warren Gay, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To authorize closure of the Machias Town Office at noon on Christmas Eve December 24th allowing municipal employees to use vacation time for the remainder of the day.

12. TOWN EMPLOYEE CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Board discussed holding the town employee Christmas party on December 18th from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To fund the annual employee Christmas party with two hundred dollars from the contingency account.

13. MANAGER'S REPORT/OTHER BUSINESS

- A. On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board
VOTED:

To send a letter to Representative William Tuell asking for him to author a bill designating the Machias bridge as the Jeremiah O'Brien Memorial Bridge.

- B. Mr. Loughlin reported that he researched the length of time municipalities are required to maintain federally funded tennis courts and found that the courts must be maintained "in perpetuity". Mr. Whelan suggested that the town's recreation committee be reactivated in order to make decisions regarding the tennis courts. The Board directed that Mr. Loughlin advertise for interested citizens to serve on the committee.

- C. The Board discussed the scheduling of their second meeting in December.

On a motion by Danny Manchester, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board

VOTED:

To move the Board of Selectmen's meeting to December 23rd at 6:00 PM.

- D. Mr. Loughlin asked the Board to consider paying Joey Dennison fifteen dollars per hour as a part-time snowplow driver. Mr. Loughlin explained that Mr. Dennison is available for call-out and he is a reliable driver. The Board discussed the request.

On a motion by Warren Gay, seconded by Glenn Davis, the Board

VOTED:

To pay Joey Dennison \$15.00 per hour for call-out for snowplowing.

- E. Mr. Loughlin reported that the Ford Explorer police vehicle was involved in an accident during pursuit of a suspect. The Board discussed the circumstances of the accident. Members of the Board pointed out that funds for the purchase of a new vehicle would have been included in the upcoming year's budget. Mr. Carter noted that a special town meeting would have to be scheduled to obtain authorization to borrow funds for a new vehicle; it was decided to request funds not to exceed thirty-five thousand dollars for the purchase. Mr. Loughlin said that he would advertise a special town meeting for the first meeting in January.

- F. Mr. Loughlin advised the Board that a taxpayer is offering to exchange property if the Board would be willing to write off his outstanding property taxes and sewer charges.

- G. Mr. Gay suggested that the police department perform more patrols by the school complex since it appears there is a problem with speeding vehicles during school hours.

On a motion by Glenn Davis, seconded by Warren Gay, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM.