

BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS

OCTOBER 14, 2020

A meeting of the Machias Board of Selectpeople was called to order at the Machias Tele-business Center and via the Zoom platform at 6:06 PM by Chairman Josh Rolfe. In attendance were Board members Paula Johnson-Rolfe, James Jackson, and Leslie Haynes; Secretary Cathy Lord; Town Clerk Sandra Clifton; Finance Director Meghan Dennison; Brandon Merrill, Sarah Craighead Dedmond. Richard Rolfe, Scott Porter, Joyce Fragale, Nicole Case, Bruce Smith, Bob Berta.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by James Jackson, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2020 Board meeting.

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by James Jackson, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2020 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by James Jackson, the Board
VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #24 in the amount of \$18,395.17; to approve municipal warrant #25 in the amount of \$399,062.71; to approve municipal warrant #26 in the amount of \$10,517.20; to approve municipal warrant #27 in the amount of \$69,685.68; to approve municipal warrant #28 in the amount of \$14,176.94; to approve municipal warrant #29 in the amount of \$539,270.36; to approve municipal warrant #30 in the amount of \$9,146.82; to approve municipal warrant #31 in the amount of \$11,037.84; and, to approve municipal warrant #32 in the amount of \$56,485.35 .

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by James Jackson, the Board
VOTED:

To approve school warrant #92520 in the amount of \$274,087.86 and to approve school warrant #100920 in the amount of \$275,618.54 .

3. SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT - UTILIZATION OF COVID-19 FUNDS AT SCHOOLS

Superintendent of Schools Scott Porter briefed the Board on the second round of Covid-19 funds received by the Machias School Department; he noted that the Machias schools received \$573,474. to deal with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr. Porter advised the Board that the school department has until September 2022 to expend the funds; he added that the schools will be allowed to spend funds on revenue losses which is of major concern to many small communities since there could be a cut next year in school funding from state revenues. Mr. Porter explained that the schools still have \$191,000. from the earlier round of Covid-19 funding and it is hoped to use these funds to offset revenue losses. He added that some of the funds will need to be spent on Covid-19 prevention measures. Mr. Porter advised the Board that \$1,000,000. from the first and second funding allocation will need to be expended by December 30, 2020.

Ms. Joyce Fragale, Principal of Rose Gaffney Elementary School, reviewed efforts at the elementary school to address the needs of the physical plant aimed at addressing student and staff safety. She explained efforts to use technology to meet student educational needs. Ms. Fragale addressed how funds were expended to meet Covid-19 safety protocols. Following Ms. Fragale's presentation, Ms. Nicole Case, Principal of Machias Memorial High School, reviewed use of Covid-19 funds at the high school.

Mr. Porter explained to the Board that due to time deadlines and constraints involved in spending the funds there is a question as to adhering to established bid policies. The Board discussed municipal and school bid policies. After some discussion as to the special circumstances involved in this situation, it was the consensus of the Board that due to the time limitations surrounding the expenditure of Covid-19 funds that the school department be allowed to forego established bid policies at the present time. Ms. Dennison cautioned that the school department should follow federal guidelines as stipulated by federal authorities to ensure that the Town is not held responsible for mismanagement of funds. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe reiterated Ms. Dennison's suggestion by encouraging that the school department follow procedures outlined by the federal government in using the funds. Mr. Bruce Smith commented that with approaching cold weather the school department should address needs of the building and use of the outside environment as soon as possible. Mr. Jackson noted the need for the school department to keep a "good paper trail" and keep track of every dollar and cent spent to ensure accountability in the use of the pandemic funds. Mr. Porter advised the Board that he has hired an individual familiar with grants who will be responsible for tracking Covid-19 federal funds.

Mr. Rolfe thanked Mr. Porter and the two principals for providing information to the Board. Mr. Porter said that he wanted to follow a clear plan; he noted that the schools are trying to use the outdoor environment for educational opportunities as much as possible at the present time.

4. DISCUSSION OF HUNTING AT THE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Mr. Rolfe advised the Board of a request to bow and arrow hunt at the airport; he advised the other members of the Board that he has not spoken to Mr. Radeka (Chairman of the Machias Airport Committee) yet about the request. Mr. Rolfe noted that safety is the major issue with this request; he advised the Board that there are posted "No Hunting" signs in the vicinity of the terminal building, the airplane parking area, and the runway. Mr. Rolfe said that there are some areas away from the airplane area where there could be hunting. He pointed out that turkeys are a problem in the area. Mr. Haynes noted his concern for town employees working at the airport if the Board allowed hunting. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe agreed that hunting is a concern since there may be town employees working outside on the airport property. Mr. Rolfe commented that the entire airport property would have to be posted or the Board may want to look at creating an ordinance. He pointed out that hunters legally do not have to seek permission from landowners to hunt on private property in Maine.

Mr. Rolfe noted that permission to hunt was granted to one person who requested to hunt at the airport in the past; he suggested that the use of bow and arrow or shotgun could be allowed with stipulations. Mr. Jackson stated his concern for aircraft landing at the airport such as Life Flight. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe added that there are safety issues involved with hunting at the airport. Mr. Bruce Smith commented that there is the potential for accidents. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Rolfe discuss the issue with Mr. Radeka to get input from the airport committee before the Board makes a decision.

5. MASKS - NEW GOVERNOR'S ORDERS TO ADDRESS COVID-19 INFECTIONS

Mr. Rolfe noted that Stage 4 of Governor Mill's re-opening plan involves loosening up some restrictions on people meeting in groups; he noted that the guidance could be interpreted as mandating that masks be worn. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe directly read aloud the guidelines requiring the need to wear masks in public areas. Mr. Rolfe pointed out that the guidelines say that people should be seated six feet from one another and that people should wear masks coming and going from meetings but not necessarily during meetings. Mr. Rolfe suggested that the the Board may want to think about returning to the exclusive use of Zoom meetings. He noted that Zoom meetings do increase the attendance of people participating in Board meetings. Mr. Rolfe polled the members of the Board. After the Board's discussion, Mr. Rolfe said that the Board would comply with the Governor's order and by consensus of the Board, meetings will be held via the Zoom platform without the members of the Board being physically together in one room at the

tele-business center. Mr. Rolfe also noted that face masks are required to be worn by people going into the town office; he asked that town office personnel post a notice on the front door advising that a face covering is required to enter the office.

6. DISCUSSION OF OPEN SEAT ON BOARD

Mr. Rolfe confirmed that the Board cannot appoint a member to fill an open vacancy on the Board. He pointed out that in a previous situation regarding an open seat on the Board it was decided to hold a special town election to fill the seat. Mr. Rolfe noted that this was done due to members of the Board requesting the election. Ms. Clifton advised the Board that special elections do not have a major voter turn-out. Mr. Rolfe noted that state statutes do outline that open seats do not have to be filled until the next scheduled election; he advised the other members of the Board that he also sought out a legal opinion on the question. Mr. Rolfe pointed out that even if a special election were scheduled the seat could not be filled until December/January. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe commented that she did not see the need for another Board member at the present time. She pointed to the cost involved in scheduling a special election and the fact that there is such a low voter turn-out and representation for special elections as being problem areas. The members of the Board discussed filling the open seat. It was the consensus of the Board to continue to operate as a Board of four at the present time.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Mr. Rolfe asked the Board if the Town wants to sponsor an ad in the Paper Talks Magazine this year as the Town has done for the past ten years. He noted that the cost for the ad is \$236. Mr. Rolfe suggested using funds from the manager's travel stipend line in the administrative budget to pay for the ad. Ms. Dennison discussed funding the ad in this manner; she noted that the Board could recommend this to the department head but the question is who would make the decision? Mr. Rolfe observed there needs to be clarification as to who would approve the Board's recommendation. Ms. Dennison asked why the Board does not utilize its contingency? The Board discussed funding the ad.

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by James Jackson, the Board

VOTED:

That the cost of the ad in Paper Talks Magazine be offset from the manager's travel stipend from the line in the administration budget with the understanding the funding will be offset on the bottom line.

B. Ms. Dennison informed the Board that the playground equipment will be installed on October 22nd at the recreation area.

On a motion by Paula Johnson-Rolfe, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM.