



**Selectmen's Meeting
MINUTES
Bristol Town Office, April 15th, 2020**

Selectmen Present: Chad Hanna, Paul Yates. Apologies: Kristine Poland

Also Present: Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Jessica Westhaver (Treasurer); Rachel Bizarro (Town Clerk)

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Chad Hanna, at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Hanna, seconded by Yates, to accept the minutes from the April 1st meeting. Motion passed 2 – 0.

New Business:

The Treasurer, Jess Westhaver, presented information on the costs and savings from leasing a postage meter. Selectmen agreed that this appeared to offer the Town Office benefits, and endorsed proceeding with the lease.

Jess Westhaver as Assessing Clerk reported that a portion of a property in the Pemaquid Point area has been determined to have no known owner. The property was previously billed as part of a neighboring parcel, whose owner challenged the assessed acreage, leading to research that found no identifiable deed to 9.4 acres as far back as 1861. The Town Office will notify abutters of the finding and ask if any can prove their ownership. Failing this, the Town will tax the property to 'Unknown Owners' and once the lien for non-payment has run its course, the lot can be sold by municipal quitclaim.

Steve Termine, for the Shellfish Committee, requested the Board's support for actions by the Committee to control Canada geese whose numbers and pollution are now threatening the water quality in the Pemaquid River and shellfish beds. He believed that a federal permit for out-of-season hunting would have to be obtained in the name of the Town to protect the resource, as individual landowners can only get a permit for their own property. Hanna stressed that landowners' permissions would have to be obtained, and Termine thought that any culling should be done in the late fall or spring, when migrants would have left and the focus could be on the over-wintering birds that appear to be the cause of the population explosion.

Old Business:

The Town Administrator briefed the Board on Covid-19 related issues. Revenue from Excise Tax is down as few new registrations are being made, and the pace of registration renewals appears to have slowed given the state's grant of a grace period during the emergency. This could impact the Town's ability to fund its full highways program. Hanna asked for a detailed comparison year to year of excise tax collections for the next discussion of road work.

Hall gave the board a memo from Westhaver on staffing options for the Town Office during the emergency, noting that one staff member is working from home. Hanna asked how much longer the project would take to complete, that is being done from home. Hall believed that it might take around two weeks, after which point the staffer could be furloughed. The matter will be further reviewed on April 29th.

Donations received for the Worthy Poor Fund (available to supplement the General Assistance funds voted at Town Meeting) have reached \$13,550 since Hall appealed for donations in the March Town newsletter.

In preparation for reopening the Town Office to the public, staff have discussed installing a removable plexiglass shield to protect the two Clerk's workstations. Bizarro has looked into vendors and the Board concurred that such a shield should be procured.

Town Projects: Hall reported that the School Board had this afternoon approved a contract for Phase 3 of the ballfield with Hanley Construction. This will utilize \$113,860 of the \$115,000 donated for the completion of the field. It was moved by Hanna, seconded by Yates, to endorse the School Board's decision. Motion passed, 2 – 0.

Hanna will sign the contract once the copy signed by School Board Chair Kolodin is received at the Town Office.

Yates reported that the Beach Pavilion is an estimated 90% complete, and expressed satisfaction with the appearance and quality of the work, especially the boardwalk across the dunes.

Hall reported that Phil Fitton had started work on the masonry repair on the south side of the Town Office.

Line of Credit: Following discussion as to what should trigger a draw-down of the Town's tax-anticipation line of credit, it was move by Hanna, seconded by Yates, to authorize the Treasurer to take an advance of \$250,000 from the line of credit whenever the Town's checking balance falls below \$400,000.

Roads: the Board directed Hall to advertise for bids to grade four of the Town's gravel roads, viz. Sproul Hill Road, Split Rock Road, Sodom Road and Old County Road.

Hall reported on the bids received by the County for conversion of street lights to LED. Matt Lutkus, Damariscotta Town Manager, on behalf of the seven towns involved, is arranging a conference call with each of the bidders for the afternoon of Wednesday, April 22. Hanna will plan to join those calls.

Broadband: Hall asked the Board to begin consideration of what would be needed to get 100% coverage of the Town's roads with fiber for broadband internet service. The current emergency has shown the problems for those homes without access to broadband, whether for school lessons, telemedicine or working from home. It is likely that grants of up to \$500,000 would be needed to pay for the capital costs of such expansion. Hanna stressed that this is a complex question, both financially and in terms of whether the Town would be willing to borrow to accomplish this. The Broadband Committee should complete its work of identifying existing coverage on a house-by-house basis, following which Hanna would be interested in a further meeting with Tidewater Telecom.

Regular Business:

A liquor license renewal had been received for The Anchor Inn, along with a request for a new liquor license for its affiliated company, Muscongus Bay Lobster. The Board asked Hall to schedule and advertise a Public Hearing on the new application at the Board's meeting set for April 29th, following which both applications will be taken up.

Westhaver presented four Open Space Land Classifications requiring approval of a change of name of the landowner: one case of withdrawal from a family trust to the family, and three parcels to reflect the merger of the land trusts into the Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust.

Selectmen reviewed and approved a Building Permit for at Map 033, lot 020.

Selectmen reviewed and approved Warrants for accounts payable and payroll for the Town Office, Fire Department, Parks and Recreation, and the Bristol/South Bristol Transfer Station.

There was no correspondence to report.

Public Meetings: The Chair gave notice of one forthcoming public meeting:

- Selectmen: Wednesday, April 29th, 7 pm at the Town Office

[Meetings are subject to postponement or cancellation in the event of direction to that effect from the Governor's Office, or determination by a committee's Chair that a meeting is not essential or that a quorum cannot be attained.]

It was moved by Yates, seconded by Hanna, to enter Executive Session pursuant to M.R.S. Title 1, Chapter 13, section 405.6 (A), to discuss a personnel matter. Motion carried, 2 – 0, and the Board entered Executive Session at 8.15 pm.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8.27 pm. There being no action to take on the discussion in Executive Session, and no further business before the Board, the Board adjourned at 8.27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Hall, Town Administrator

(Please review video of meeting at <http://lctv.org/?s=bristol> for full coverage)