



**Selectmen's Meeting
August 14th, 2019
MINUTES**

Selectmen Present: *Chad Hanna, Paul Yates, Kristine Poland.*
Also Present: *Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Candy Congdon (Lincoln County News).*

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

It was moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to accept the Minutes of July 31st as presented. Motion passed 3 – 0.

Matters Referred from Other Town Bodies:

The Town Clerk, Rachel Bizarro, brought two matters to the Selectmen's attention:

(1) Elections: the Secretary of State's office has requested changes to the layout of the polling place at Bristol Town Hall. Bizarro presented two options: either purchase new voting booths for the Town Hall, whose configuration would allow greater space between voters; or else move to the Bristol Mills Fire House, where there would be sufficient space to use the existing voting booths. To use the Town Hall as at present, for a major election such as the 2020 Presidential, the Town will need to purchase three new voting stations (each with four voting booths).

Asked by Poland whether, if cost were not an issue, which location she would prefer, Bizarro indicated a slight preference for the Fire Station. She affirmed that the Fire Chief is supportive of such a move if that is the decision. The deadline to notify the state of any change in location for this November's election will be September 6th. It was agreed to hold the November 5th, 2019 election in the Bristol Mills Fire House, and to review future arrangements thereafter based on the experience of this election.

(2) Tax acquired properties: Bizarro reviewed the outstanding liens which will mature this year, and the three tax-acquired properties currently held by the Town. One tax-acquired property, account number 1038, being a mobile home with little value for resale, Selectmen indicated a willingness to write off the delinquent taxes if the resident would complete an application for Homestead

Exemption. This should exempt her from taxes going forward. The other two tax-acquired properties were not discussed.

Two other tax accounts several years in arrears (due to being tax-acquired in previous years, and where arrangements to pay arrears have not been honored) are due to mature in October 2020 when it is likely they will become tax-acquired again. Acct. # 1806 will be told to apply for a Poverty Abatement and if she does so, this being another mobile home of little value if sold, Selectmen may exercise their right per Article 61 of the Town Meeting Warrant to waive foreclosure on the property.

Acct. # 2384 is a non-residential property. If the lien matures, Selectmen will offer the property for sale by sealed bid.

Old Business:

South Bristol Selectmen had still not agreed to meet. Bizarro offered her observation that, in addition to motor vehicle transactions for which the new South Bristol staff are awaiting certification by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, numerous South Bristol residents are using the Bristol Town Office for convenience for (for example) Inland Fisheries and Wildlife transactions, due to the limited opening hours of the South Bristol office. The Selectmen will continue to seek a meeting to discuss this and other issues of joint concern.

Town Projects: Hanna reported that the Upper Round Pond Road bridge is proceeding well, but two change orders have had to be agreed at a cost to the Town of some additional \$11,500.

The Bristol Mills Liberty Pole has seen slow progress. Russ Guibord continues to burn out material from the former mast from the base pipe.

The Parks Commissioners held a pre-bid meeting this day at Pemaquid Beach for prospective bidders on the new pavilion. A dozen people were reported to have attended. Bids are due on August 28th.

Phase 2 of the Bristol School girls' softball field project is nearing completion. Phase 3 will likely take place next year and is dependent on fundraising.

New Business:

Funds Transfers: Hall reported that, with close to \$1.2 million in the Town's checking account, it is now appropriate to make the transfers mandated by the Town Meeting to reserve accounts and for service organizations.

One decision was required by the Special Town meeting of October 31, 2018, which voted to transfer \$40,000 to either the Bristol Dam Repair reserve account or the Fish Ladder reserve account. As this sum will be needed to complete the dam renovations planned with Knowles Industrial for October, it was moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to transfer \$40,000 from surplus to the Dam Reserve Account. Motion carried, 3 – 0.

Selectmen directed the Treasurer (Hall) to make the other transfers and payments as directed by the Warrant articles.

Broadband coverage: Hall reported on preliminary meetings with Tidewater Telecom with a view to the Town supporting a ConnectME grant application by Tidewater aimed at providing universal broadband in Bristol through extending their fiber-to-home availability to the 66 miles of public and private roads in Bristol not currently served by their fiber. Tidewater have costed this out at \$900,000 and are willing to make Bristol their first priority for universal broadband coverage. Hall expects them to invest up to \$500,000 of their own funds towards this.

To maximize the chances of getting a ConnectME grant of up to \$300,000, the Town will have to find a way to raise the remaining balance – perhaps \$100,000 to \$150,000. Some of this may be able to be raised from donors in the community, but ConnectME would also like to see a Town invest taxpayer funds as sign of popular support and commitment.

Selectmen asked Hall to invite Tidewater to present their thinking to a September Selectmen's meeting.

Town Office water pump: Hall reported that after repeated plumber's visits to address the problem of inadequate pressure in the Town Office bathroom water supply, he was reluctantly recommending installing a new pump. He had a quote of \$4,111 for the work, which would be funded from the Town Office capital reserve. Selectmen agreed he should go ahead.

Regular Business:

Selectmen reviewed the Town's financials for the seven months to July 31. Hall noted that areas of concern were Code Enforcement, where revenue from permits and fees is down, and Highways, where the change orders for the Upper Round Pond Road bridge are threatening to surpass the budget.

It was moved by Hanna, seconded by Yates, to approve a Catering Permit for T & T Restaurants, Inc., d/b/a the Damariscotta River Grill, for an event on the afternoon of August 22 at Field Road, Round Pond.

It was moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to approve a Business Equipment Tax Rebate application to Maine Revenue Services from Hammond Lumber, Inc., for the 2018 personal property taxes on their former property at the Pemaquid Mill.

Selectmen reviewed and approved building permits for Map 008, lot 027-D; Map 010, lot 061; Map 019, lot 044; and Map 027, lot 043-C.

Selectmen reviewed and signed Warrants for payroll and accounts payable for the Town, Fire & Rescue, Parks and Recreation, Bristol Consolidated School, and the Bristol/South Bristol Transfer Station.

Correspondence:

Hall reported a donation to the Town of \$6,000 from Richard and Barbara Munson, owners of a property on Route 32 in Chamberlain, to pay for the installation of solar powered speed-feedback signs for that stretch of Route 32. Selectmen signed a letter of thanks to the Munsons.

The AOS 93 School Superintendent, Craig Jurgenson, inquired by email the Town's view on whether to admit to Bristol Consolidated School in August a student whose parents are purchasing a lot in Bristol and intend to move to the Town before the end of the year. Selectmen agreed that, if there are no financial consequences for the school, they would defer to the School Board to take a decision in the best interests of the child.

Hall reported on a request for burial of cremains at Ocean Hill Cemetery. Poland recalled that when this cemetery was transferred to the Town, all space was taken by family plots – although these are not necessarily filled, and burials do continue in those plots. However it was understood at the time that there is no space not allocated to existing family plots, so that we would have to regretfully decline burial of a person not connected to one of those families.

Public Comments: None.

Notice of Public Meetings:

Chair Hanna gave notice of forthcoming meetings as follows:

- Parks and Recreation Commission, Tuesday, August 20th, 6 pm at the Ellingwood Information Center; also Wednesday, August 28th, 6 pm at the Ellingwood Information Center for review of bids on Pemaquid Beach pavilion project.
- Selectmen: next regular meeting, Wednesday, September 4th; workshop on town staffing, Wednesday, August 28th, both at 7 pm at the Town Office

It was moved by Yates, seconded by Poland, to enter Executive Session pursuant to M.R.S. Title 1, chapter 13, section 405.6.C, to discuss a possible real estate transaction. Motion passed, 3 – 0, and the Board entered Executive Session at 8.21 p.m.

The Board resumed public session at 8.37 p.m. Chair Hanna reported that the Board had made no decision but intended to hold another Executive Session to which they would invite the town's attorney, Jennifer Villeneuve, Esq., before coming to any decision.

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 8.39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hall

Town Administrator