



**Selectmen's Meeting
MINUTES
Bristol Town Office, February 19th, 2020**

*Selectmen Present: Kristine Poland, Paul Yates. Apologies: Chad Hanna
Also Present: Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Jessica Westhaver (Deputy Treasurer);
Candy Congdon (Lincoln County News); Pat Porter.*

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

It was moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to accept the minutes from the February 12th meeting as presented. Motion passed 2 – 0.

Veterans Memorial Walkway: Peter Anderson, for the Veterans Memorial Committee, presented a question regarding the permit application for a walkway in the shoreland zone at Ellingwood Park, where the Veterans Committee is planning a walkway with plantings and monuments honoring the Town's veterans. The DEP's usual practice is that a six foot wide walkway (gravel or paved) can be approved under Permit by Rule (PBR). Anderson reported (and the CEO has confirmed) that DEP has indicated they would approve an eight foot wide pathway if the Town requested it. The Veterans Committee request an eight foot wide path in order to allow (i) two wheelchairs to pass or to travel side by side; and (ii) to permit access by maintenance vehicles of the Parks Department. Anderson confirmed that the walkway would be more than 25 feet from the river at all points.

The Board indicated their approval of an eight foot wide walkway and Hall will so report to the Code Enforcement Officer. The Selectmen asked Anderson to ensure that the Parks and Recreation Commission reviews and fully approves the plans for the walkway and in particular approves its eight foot width.

Matters Referred from Other Town Bodies:

Audit: Hall and Westhaver spoke to procedural issues that had arisen during and after the Town Audit in January. Westhaver presented a list of transfers between accounts requested by the Auditors, some of which were found to be based on incorrect assumptions by the Auditors. She reported that the Auditors had not responded to questions in a timely way and had printed the Schedule A-4 before

the outstanding issues of transfers had been resolved. They appear to have taken the position that the transfers among accounts should be done to make the A-4 look correct, rather than re-print the Audit report to correct the numbers.

The major issue is that the Auditors believe the sums authorized in the Warrant for transfer out of the Dam and Fish Ladder reserve funds should have been made, even though the work for which they were allocated was deferred to 2020. The Town Office's position is that those funds should remain in interest-earning reserve accounts until needed, i.e. that the Warrant articles are permissive, not mandatory. Additionally, the Fire Departments budget initially appeared to be overdrawn based on incorrect interpretation of the warrant article. Once this was corrected, the A-4 still indicated withdrawing the incorrect overdraft amount from their BFR Emergency Capital Reserve.

Accepting that the Audit report is already at the printers with the 2019 Town Report, the Board's guidance is to make the requested transfers so as to conform the 2019 accounts; and then to return the sums to the interest-bearing accounts until needed.

Hall also recommended that the Board meet again with the Auditors to review their process for the future, once their schedule permits.

Reimbursement for certain Fire and Rescue calls: At the request of the Fire Chief, Hall asked the Board whether Chief Leeman should research a possible policy to bill for requests for First Responder and Fire and Rescue calls from non-taxpayers. He reported his understanding that a growing number of Towns are billing non-residents or non-taxpayers for reimbursement of expenses, and that many insurance companies pay these claims as a matter of course.

Yates and Poland both indicated their view that no taxpayer, resident or non-resident, should be charged for services they pay for with their taxes; but saw no objection to exploring a policy seeking reimbursement from visitors. Hall will indicate to the Fire Chief that he should develop and present a draft policy, without commitment by the Board.

Thompson Landing: The Harbor Committee asked approval to spend \$2,540 from their funds to have the Thompson landing property surveyed, as the Deeds do not make clear exactly what the Town owns. It was moved by Poland to approve the expenditure, seconded by Yates. Motion passed, 2 – 0.

New Business:

Lighthouse Tower: Hall drew attention to the expiry on August 31, 2021, of the license over the Pemaquid Point Lighthouse tower held by the American Lighthouse Foundation. He asked whether the Selectmen wished to reinstate a Lighthouse Committee such as had handled the Town's unsuccessful attempts to 'reunite the light' from 2007 to 2014. Poland suggested he contact the members of that Committee and also consult with the Parks Commissioners, and tabled the matter until after town meeting.

Old Bristol Days and Maine Bicentennial: Hall reported that this year's Olde Bristol Days now had an active committee, which was functioning as part of a volunteer Bicentennial Committee. These are meeting informally, and Poland asked that their meetings be given public notice as public meetings of the Town, as they are expected to have \$10,000 of public money voted at Town Meeting. She did not ask that the volunteers be appointed by the Board, or sign oaths of office, but if the Town is handling all funds (appropriated or donated) the Committee should hold its meetings in public.

Hall raised a further question, regarding a proposed donation to the Merritt Brackett Lobster Boat Races. The boat races do not have a dedicated non-profit entity and the prospective donor sought to protect their tax status by donating to the Town for use by the Boat Races. Westhaver indicated that if funds were donated to the Town for the purpose of the boat races, the payment of prizes and any disbursements would need to be made by the Town with proper paperwork (receipts & W-9 forms for prize earnings). Cash transactions were not appropriate, which was discussed with the Auditors in 2019. All prize money disbursements over \$600 be reported on IRS Form 1099s.

Poland asked that the matter be tabled until the next (March 4th) meeting so that Chad Hanna could join the discussion and to give time for further reflection. So tabled.

Salary payroll: Per a request from the Parks Commissioners, Hall raised the question of monthly versus weekly salary payments, previously touched upon in Executive Session. The Policy Handbook indicates that all salaried staff will be paid monthly, although the Parks Director is paid weekly. The Parks Director has indicated no preference. The Board directed that the Parks Director be paid her salary monthly to conform with the Town's Policy, after Town meeting approves the 2020 Parks budget which contains a salary increase for her.

Regular Business:

A tree growth recertification request was presented and approved for Map 005, lot 020-A.

Selectmen reviewed and approved Building Permits for work at Map 003, lot 034-B, and Map 021, lot 025.

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.

Correspondence:

A card of thanks was received from Claire Mocariski on behalf of the ElderCare Network of Lincoln County.

The Town Clerk reported that the Advisory Committee of the Maine Shellfish Restoration and Resilience Fund has recommended a grant of \$11,075 for the Shellfish Committee's ongoing Pemaquid Watershed cleanup efforts in 2020.

The state entomologist had send his annual warning regarding brown tail moths, which is posted in the Town Office.

Charter Communications (Spectrum) had send their cable television franchise fee payment for the year, which at \$29,558.34 is a little in excess of what had been forecast.

Finally Hall showed Selectmen a revised contract with CMP which adds five additional accounts to qualify for solar energy credits from the Transfer Station array (for a total of 15 Town electric accounts), thanks to the lifting on January 1 of the regulatory limit of 10 accounts.

Public Meetings: Yates gave notice of forthcoming public meetings, as follows:

- Byways Committee, Tuesday, February 25th, 6.30 pm at the Town Office
- Broadband Committee, Thursday, February 27th, 7.00 pm at the Town Office
- Selectmen, Wednesday, March 4th, 7.00 pm at the Town Office
- Bicentennial Committee, Thursday, March 5th, 11 am at the Bradley Inn
- TOWN MEETING: Monday, March 16th, town election at the Bristol Mills Fire House, 8 am to 8 pm; Tuesday, March 17th, open meeting, 7 pm at the Bristol Consolidated School gym.

He also gave notice that Absentee Ballots are available for the state election of March 3rd (referendum and party primaries) and the Town Meeting secret ballot election on March 16th, 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7.58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Hall
Town Administrator