



**Selectmen's Meeting
MINUTES
Bristol Town Office, May 18th, 2022**

Selectmen Present: Chad Hanna (Chair), Paul Yates, Kristine Poland.

Also present: Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Joe Rose (Code Enforcement Officer); Mary-Rae Means, Cam Williams and Russ Brackett (Bristol Village Improvement Society); Steven Hufnagel and Joan Ray (Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust); Abden Simmons; Morgan Pluchino; Karen Farnsworth.

Chad Hanna called the Board to order at 6.31 pm, followed by recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Poland moved, seconded by Yates, acceptance of the Minutes of the meeting of May 4th as presented. Motion passed, 3 – 0.

New Business:

Bristol Mills village traffic: The Chair invited representatives of the Bristol Village Improvement Society to come to the table to discuss, at their request, traffic speeds and pedestrian safety along Route 130 in Bristol Mills village. Mary-Rae Means gave an overview of the increasing volume and speed of traffic, combined with growing pedestrian traffic and changing demographics in the village. She highlighted three especially dangerous locations; from north to south, the boat launch at Ellingwood Park, the Swimming Hole, and the exit from Redonnett Mill Road.

Cam Williams and Russ Brackett followed with emphasis on how young families had now moved into the village bringing children who increase the pedestrian traffic and the danger of accidents. Brackett noted that his property, at the corner of Upper Round Pond Road, has a considerable length of road frontage which would be appropriate for a sidewalk, which he would welcome. Williams and Means also welcomed a sidewalk in front of their properties.

Hanna agreed that sidewalks are appropriate in a village such as Bristol Mills, but given their cost he would expect Maine DoT to require a substantial contribution from the Town before the state would agree to fund such a project. We would need to consider how to raise such a match. He thought that it could be a realistic project for a 5 to 10-year time frame. He thought discussion with the DoT should focus on lower-cost, immediate steps for 'traffic calming,' and there was discussion of what would be permitted for additional signage and road markings, plus restoring the speed feedback sign at the north end of the village lost when a vehicle hit its post. Hall noted that it is still expected that Hagar will arrange for the painting of the new pedestrian crosswalk by the Town Office, within the current month.

The Board asked Hall to arrange a meeting with the DoT District Engineer, David Allen, to consider approaches for traffic calming and sidewalks, and also requested the Village

Improvement Society to contact the Transportation Subcommittee of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, as this should be considered in the context of long-term capital planning.

Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust: Steven Hufnagel, the Trust's Executive Director, and Joan Ray, the Trust's Lands Conservation Director, discussed the Trust's new acquisition of approximately 450 acres of land north of Poor Farm Road, including most of the shores of Half Moon Pond. Hufnagel stressed the Trust's commitment to maintain access for traditional uses including hunting and snowmobiling, and discussed plans for future hiking trails and car parking.

Hall thanked Hufnagel for the Trust's maintaining the Bristol Recreational Trail behind the school, and noted that he had been approached that day by the Trust's Trails co-ordinator, Jim Grenier, regarding completing the trail as a loop, by adding a path parallel to Route 130 at the front of the school. He had referred this to the School Principal and School Board Chair for consideration.

Public Comment: The chair invited Morgan Pluchino, resident of 217 Sodom Road, to address the Board. She thanked the Fire Department for their response to a brush fire that threatened her property on May 9th. She also noted with gratitude the work being done this day by Hagar Enterprises to grade and add gravel to her end of Sodom Road, but said she requires much more to be done facilitate access by emergency vehicles to her home. The Chair indicated that there is no funding for paving or major upgrading of Sodom Road, though more grading will be included in the package currently being advertised for bids. She asked how she could get a higher priority, and was told that she could continue to appear before the Board and Town meeting and request funding for work. She indicated that she has the time to do that.

Code Enforcement matters: CEO Joe Rose presented the Board with the plans for Francis Kramer Estates, an 11-home subdivision off Pemaquid Harbor Road near Soldiers Cove Road. This is the first subdivision application with a new road to be received for many years, and Rose reminder the Board that by ordinance, the Select Board must approve the plans and construction methods for the road prior to the overall subdivision plan going to the Planning Board, which would occur on Thursday May 19th.

The Board reviewed the plans and Hanna moved, seconded by Yates, that the Board approve the design of the road as presented. Motion passed, 3 – 0.

Rose also brought the Board's attention to LD 2003, a bill which had now been signed into law with the intent to create more units of affordable housing. It would require all municipalities to allow up to two Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADUs), sometimes known as In-Law Apartments, on any lot, subject only to meeting plumbing codes and to minimum 30 day rental terms for the units. Rose felt this created a bad precedent, of overturning the customary rule that a Town could have stricter ordinances than state law, and replacing it with permitting a Town only to have less restrictive ordinances.

The law will require a major revision of Bristol's Land Use Ordinance, which currently limits ADUs to a single unit not to exceed 600 sq.ft. and with a requirement to revert to single-family use on the death or transfer of the occupant. Poland noted that this could also require the Town to incur significant costs to police and enforce the new rules. She suggested that we seek advice from Midcoast Council of Governments or Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, on how to adapt our ordinances.

Public Comment, II: Abden Simmons, Waldoboro Selectman, introduced himself as a candidate for Maine Senate District 13. A former state Representative in the 118th Maine Legislature, he is a shellfish harvester and broker. He discussed the importance of not letting farmed oysters crowd out clams and other species, as may be happening in the Damariscotta River, and the impact of inflation of building material costs on affordability of housing. The Board thanked him for introducing himself and his interest in the Town.

Old Business:

Roads and Bridges: Hanna reviewed the program of work for the balance of the year that he had discussed this day with the Highway Foreman, Sean Hunter. Grading is at present being advertised for bids covering the gravel portions of Old County Road, Sodom Road, Split Rock Road and Sproul Hill Road. He and Hunter had marked out for paving sections of road as follows: Carl Bailey Road, ± 0.9 miles in total, of which the southernmost 0.2 miles before the Town Line would be for grinding and then resurfacing, the balance being maintenance paving; the Lower Round Pond Road, ± 1.5 miles from Hatchtown Bridge to Route 32; and on Sproul Hill Road, maintenance paving of the ± 0.3 miles from Route 130 to the gravel section, then new paving on approximately 1265 feet of gravel road to the top of the hill. Including the extra material for the ground and newly paved sections, this amounted to the equivalent of a little over 3 miles of paving. Given the uncertainties around likely bid prices this year, he would work out a set of options for an RFP notice to be published next week.

He also reminded the Board that Hatchtown Bridge would need replacing, perhaps in 2024, with engineering being funded in 2023. He recognized that Hagar Enterprises wished to see this as a design-build project, but Hanna doubted that we could get many competing bids if we went the design-build route.

Tax Collector position: Hall asked the Board to consider a Special Town Meeting for the Town to vote on separating the Tax Collector position from the Town Administrator. The Board agreed to set the date of July 20th, the date of a regular Select Board meeting, for a Special Town meeting at 6.30 pm at the start of that session of the Board. It was noted that while 60 days' public notice is required for the Meeting, additional items could if necessary be added to the Warrant until 7 days before the posted date.

Property Tax update: The Town Administrator reported that Parker Appraisals have not yet finished their work updating the Real Estate and Personal Property records, but he hoped that the Board would be able to commit taxes by Wednesday, June 8th. He had run numbers based on the current TRIO valuation records and the sums needed to be raised for the Town, School and County, and believed that we will be very close to last year's 7.2 mill rate.

The annual Certified Ratio Declaration to the state is due June 1st. The state had supplied an estimated ratio of 90%. Statute allows the Town to set a rate within 10% of this figure without needing to justify its numbers, i.e. within a range from 81% to 99%. Hall noted that a 99% ratio would maintain substantially all of the value of Homestead Exemptions for residents, which would be reduced by just 1% from \$25,000 to \$24,750. Hanna moved, seconded by Poland, setting the rate at 99%. Motion passed, 3 – 0, and the Board signed the Declaration in their capacity as Assessors.

Payments for Health Care in lieu of participation in MMA plan: Hanna reminded the Board of its discussion with an employee to pay a quarterly sum towards their existing health care coverage, which would be far less than the cost to the Town of the employee's participation in the Town's MMA plan. Poland pointed out that this should be incorporated into the Town's Human Resources Policy Handbook, and that there should be provision for ensuring that the employee does in fact hold valid health insurance. Hall will circulate the current HR Handbook to the Board electronically, and will draft wording to cover the new policy allowing support for employees' alternative health plans.

Regular Business:

Building permits: The Board reviewed Permits approved by the Code Enforcement Officer for properties at Map 004, lot 101-B-1; Map 012, lot 22-A; and Map 033, lot 42-A.

The Board reviewed and approved Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants for the Town, Fire, Parks, Bristol Consolidated School and the Bristol / South Bristol Transfer Station.

Under Correspondence, the Board noted an invitation from Central Lincoln County Adult Education to this year's graduation ceremony for GED students.

The Chair gave Notice of Public Meetings as follows:

- Comprehensive Plan Committee: meeting with consultant Northstar Planning, LLC, Thursday, May 19th, 2 pm at the Town Office
- Harbor Committee, Thursday, May 19th, 5.00 pm at the New Harbor Fire Station
- Fish Committee, Thursday, May 19th, 5.00 pm at the Town Office
- Planning Board: Thursday, May 19th, 7.00 pm at the Town Office
- Comprehensive Plan Committee, regular meeting, Tuesday, May 24th, 7.00 pm at the Town Office
- Select Board, Wednesday, June 1st, 6.30 pm at the Town Office

There being no other business before the Board, the Board adjourned at 8.10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Hall
Town Administrator