

02/15/2023 Sorrento Select Board Meeting Minutes

Attending in person at the Sorrento Community Building were Selectman Jon Mickel, Town Clerk Kathi Moore, Susan Clancy-Dougherty, Dan Bierman Jr, Earl Bierman, Myles Bierman & FOX ABC Bangor. Attending via Zoom were Select Board Chair Rob Wilpan, Selectwoman Diana Gazis, Fire Chief Joey Clark, Town Attorney Dan Pileggi, Tom Bailey, Ann Blood, Chip Campbell, Darla & Mason Crocker, Dan Dougherty, Pat Dougherty, Dwight Freeman, Ronna Freiberg, Malachy Flynn, Todd Harrison, Ann Hoffner, Ruth Kennedy, Rick Knowlton, Judy Laspesa, Gerald Mehl, Amanda Mickel, John Singer, Lynn Stone, Dale Strohmaier, Hilly Welch Crary, Wendy Worrell.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Rob Wilpan.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Rob made a motion to approve the 2/01/2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Diana, unanimous vote, motion passed.

2. UPDATE ON HANCOCK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION QUOTE: Continued from last meeting. Jon has had a chance to review the quote and felt it is acceptable. Rob made a motion to approve the quote from HCPC for this year and put the balance on the warrant for the annual meeting in September, seconded by Jon, unanimous vote, motion passed.

3. UPDATE ON HARBOR POWER: Rob called Versant about installing a pole in the existing location; they will call him back with a quote.

4. UPDATE ON HARBOR RAILING: Rob is still trying to get more quotes. He has not heard back from the welder in Trenton.

5. TRIO UPDATE: Rob asked Kathi for a Trio update. She is using it on a daily basis, processing transactions and motor vehicle registrations. She has not entered any financial data in yet because the balances in QuickBooks are not correct; she is finding way too many discrepancies comparing QuickBooks balances to the Annual Reports and to the Auditor's reports. Jon asked what we need to do to settle accounts; she replied a forensic audit. The Accountant's figures do not match and she does not trust 2020 audited figures. The Machias Savings statements are not correct, they have been "reconciled" but are not correct, there are outstanding items that date back to 2017 that should have been researched and dealt with by now, the numbers are way off. Why didn't the accountant notice these issues during the audits? Rob asked her to contact Wadman and talk to him about it.

6. UPDATE ON SCANNING OLD TOWN MINUTES VOLUMES: Kathi reported that Fogler Library was supposed to contact her to arrange pickup. On Monday Feb. 13 a courier showed up, unannounced, looking to pick up the books. He had no loan agreement to sign. He said the books would be gone 2-3 days. He got his manager Greg on the telephone and he said 2-3 months. She originally let the books go with the courier but called a bit later requesting they be returned and they were the next day. She is looking into getting a scanner on loan from the Maine State Archives to do it at the town office. Rob spoke with Greg; they can start with just a couple of books and bring them back within a couple of weeks. Greg sent an email with answers to Kathi's questions; Rob said to look at the email and move forward.

7. UPDATE ON KEARSARGE AVE/WEST SHORE ROAD VEGETATION CLEARING: Joey reported he hasn't been out to see it, but believes the area been trimmed up.

8. UPDATE ON TOWN ROAD INVENTORY: Rob forgot to email Kathi with the request for volunteers for the newsletter. There is a question of GPS accuracy. What does the Board think that the accuracy should be for location culverts? Jon said as far as locating culverts, a rough accuracy is fine; for easements it's a different story. The location of water shut offs would be good to have. Diana is to see if LPWD has this info available.

9. UPDATE ON TOWN/SVIA RENTAL CONTRACT RENEWAL: Rob said he has spoken with the V.I.A. President, Todd Harrison. They are interested in renewing their contract for the downstairs, not interested in using the upstairs. As far as the question of expenses for the building vs rental income, we have been doing pretty well. Rob made a motion to draw up a one year rental contract for the building for the amount of \$2000 annually. Jon said he doesn't think that's nearly enough to cover the expenses of the building. In 2012 and prior the Town was getting \$6000 for the rental, as things have gotten more expensive we have reduced the income for that property. We should be renting it for something close to fair market value. A discussion took place with Todd Harrison. Rob said the opportunity to rent the building is minimal. Kathi said she had spoken with Christopher from West Cove Boat Yard and is interested in renting it, possibly the entire building. Rob will speak with Christopher.

Kathi said she called MMA regarding the Town buildings; the values have not been adjusted since 2018, they are all underinsured so they will send someone out to have them re-evaluated. They also said that all tenants must have a lease agreement and must provide a certificate of liability insurance. Kathi said currently WCBY is leasing out the driveway of the Old Firehouse for \$2,000 annually and is deducting this amount from work invoices so the rent is not showing as rental income. We need to start invoicing this separately; also there is currently no rental contract for WCBY.

10. UPDATE ON CB BOILER WATER FEED REPAIR: Jon reported no update; he will reach out to Steve to see what the delay is.

NEW BUSINESS:

CYBER AGREEMENT WITH MMA: MMA is requiring the Town Office adopt a Cyber Agreement, which Kathi forwarded to the Select Board for their review. Diana commented she has read it but believes it's more complex than necessary and wants to talk with MMA, Rob agreed. To be continued at the next meeting.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES FOR TOWN BUSINESS: Rob said this refers to the fire department's use of WEX credit cards for unleaded gas for using private vehicles on town business. This needs to stop right away; however it's a disservice to the person using their private vehicle. They should be reimbursed at the IRS tax rate per mile and that's it, never purchase gas period. There was a discussion about how will mileage been tracked and by whom, and the subject of an annual stipend was discussed which is not in the current budget. The mileage reimbursement procedure would be to submit within the fire department, then reviewed and approved by the Board, then on to the Treasurer for payment. Rob made a motion to provide for reimbursement by IRS rules for mileage when a town employee or firefighter does a trip for the purpose of the town, not as a response for calls at this point. Jon seconded, unanimous vote, motion passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Rob invited Town Attorney, Dan Pileggi, to talk with the Select Board about their responsibilities while in an Executive Session. Also, he said the State recommends that when a board member votes on a motion

to state their last name and how they vote. That way the person taking the minutes can accurately document how each person voted.

Rob made a motion that the Select Board enter Executive Session pursuant to **M.R.S. Title 1 § 405 6.A. *Public discussion could be reasonably expected to cause damage to the individual's reputation***
Yes-Wilpan, Yes-Mickel, Yes-Gazis, unanimous vote, motion passed. Executive Session will begin after the next item.

Jon said it was brought to his attention that a firefighter from another town responded to the Town of Sorrento to drive one of Sorrento's fire trucks. That firefighter is not listed on the Fire Department roster and does not appear to be an active member of the Sorrento Fire Department. He asked Fire Chief Joey Clark if this is the routine practice. Why are we letting people from other towns, possibly uninsured by our Fire Department, driving our apparatus? Joey said he didn't know too much of what he was talking about because he was out of town working in Jonesport. He knows there was a call but not sure of what went on. Jon said he looked at the run report and the Sullivan Fire Chief responded to our station and drove our forestry truck on a mutual aid call in Gouldsboro. This needs to stop immediately; he wants to officially oppose this practice. Joey will look into it and give info at next meeting.

At 8:30 pm the BOS went into Executive Session. At 9:16 the BOS returned from Executive Session.

Select Board Chair Rob Wilpan made the following statement: "Based on the information and cooperation by the Fire Department and the Fire Chief's recommendation, I move to refer certain Fire Department gas purchases for a law enforcement investigation".

At 9:20 Rob made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jon, unanimous vote, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted on 02/28/2023 by Kathi Moore, Town Clerk