

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday October 7, 2019 – 7PM

Present: Damon Frampton, Chair, Tom Maher, Selectman, Bill Stewart, Selectman, and Bette Jane Riordan, Secretary.

Also present: Fire Chief Ted Hartnett, Pam Cullen, Administrative Assistant to Select Board, Christiane McAllister, Accountant, Ken McDonald, TAPC, Jim Cerny, Tom Smith, John Ireland, Dave McGuckin.

1. Approve Select Board Minutes of September 23, 2019.

Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the minutes as amended of the Select Board September 23, 2019, as amended. Selectman Stewart seconded and the Motion carried.

2. Public Question and Answer.

a. Boston Post Cane Award.

Jim Cerny, in his capacity as Town Historian explained the history of this award which goes to the oldest living person residing in New Castle. This year there are two individuals who qualify: Ansel Braseth and Edwin West, both 97 years old, 4 months apart. Jim asked the Select Board to sign the certificates that will be presented

b. U.S. Census.

Pam Cullen reported that Rick Perrin from the US Census Bureau had contacted her about possibly attending a Select Board Meeting to talk about how the census will work in New Castle. There will be people going door to door to obtain information needed for the census. Pam asked the Select Board what they would like to do. They will review the information and notify Pam.

c. Recycling.

Pam reported she received a complaint from a Marina Heights resident concerning the recycling trucks going backwards on the street. She also needed to speak with Casella, the provider, about recycling in general. They indicated the company takes recycling very seriously. They do not take it to Portsmouth, but take it to Maine. Their website is very informative. She and Ken will work on an article for the Islander. He will also update the website. Their main truck holds recycling on one side of the truck, and regular garbage on the other side. Some people who had observed recycling going into the same truck should be aware that the company has separate areas for recycling and trash.

d. Office Holiday Party.

Pam asked the Select Board to approve the date of December 11, 2019 for the office holiday party, which is the same time as the quarterly Joint Loss Meeting. The Board approved the request.

e. Volunteer appreciation.

Pam acknowledged local resident, John Ireland, and thanked him for all of his efforts in assisting her.

f. Public Hearing.

Pam asked the Board to schedule a date for the Public Hearing on the acceptance of funds from the former Rec Revolving Fund as is required by statute. She needs 10 days lead time to meet the legal posting and advertising requirements. After discussion the Select Board agreed on October 21, 2019 at 6:45 PM prior to the regular Select Board Meeting. There will also be a public informational meeting on the Water Project at this October 21, 2019 meeting following completion of the regular agenda. Selectman Maher will check with Guy Stearns to make sure we have the necessary letter to go forward with the hearing.

3. New Business.

a. Avitar Building Inspector's software – Ken McDonald.

Ken updated the Select Board regarding the installation of the new Building Inspector software. Tomorrow Avitar will be linking the mapping, and will also be fixing the assessing package. He has created templates for the various forms. He noted the application for a building permit is separate. Once submitted the permit is loaded into the system with all of the necessary information. The new system requires a significant amount of data entry. Ken feels the inspectors will have difficulty given their workload. He suggested an additional person be brought in to assist them as well as Pam. One of the benefits is the new system is its ability to put "sticky notes" (electronic notes on a file) with key information. Ken discussed issues with how the new process will be rolled out.

Selectman Stewart wanted to make sure that the escrow accounts are included and tracked by this system. He noted that it will ultimately be the applicant's responsibility to initiate request for return of the escrow funds. Pam also noted that Darcy Horgan, Chair of Planning Board, has initiated a process for the Town to hold escrow in relation to permits. The Town accountant also has a financial system for tracking monies held in escrow for this purpose.

Selectman Maher indicated that setting up the whole process of data entry is very important. We have to implement this the right way. Ken also explained the benefits of the "attributes" he can input, which can show abutters' lists, all historic district properties etc. Selectman Maher suggested they consider adding additional administrative time for the building inspectors. The priority should be going forward. Going back and entering historical data could be done at a later date. A start date needs to be established and there needs to be a meeting with the Building Inspectors.

b. Public Meetings-posting. & Water & Sewer meeting.

Chair Frampton noted that going forward all meetings to be posted will go through Pam Cullen. Selectman Stewart explained that the intent was to have the Pre-Con meeting with Underwood and Granese (water project contractor) posted. He explained some confusion about the meeting postings. Pam Cullen noted that any meeting held at Town Hall is public and must be posted. Selectman Stewart had explained everything in an email earlier today. He attended the Pre-Con meeting, and provided a summary of what transpired.

The contracts are ready to be signed. He reported we just received the final DES paperwork today. The last two final documents needed prior to awarding the contract is approval from the Army Corp of Engineers and an agreement with Portsmouth regarding the purchase of wholesale water. That agreement is currently being reviewed by legal counsel, and he hopes to receive it back shortly. He hopes to award the contract by the end of the week if all agreements and paperwork are in place.

The first order of business is the two meter pits and the bridge. This will involve some water shutdown. Water flows will be reduced. Dave McGuckin asked about the payment process. Selectman Stewart thought we were going to be billed monthly. Our person from Underwood reviews it and forwards the Town accountant. We then send it to the State for approval and payment. When payment is received from the State, we disperse the funds less retainage to the contractors.

Chair Frampton asked about the line from Pierce Island. Selectman Stewart said right now the agreement is to split the cost 50-50 with Portsmouth. He noted we have until March 2020 to award that part of the contract. This will need further discussion. Selectman Maher confirmed that Evroks is communicating with respect to the work on the bridge.

c. Accountant Reports.

Christiane gave the Select Board reports for tax rate setting purposes, which need to be reviewed and sent to the Department of Revenue Administration. She also gave them the quarterly revenue and expenditure reports.

4. Old Business: None.

5. Committee Reports:

a. Fire Report: See attached

Selectman Maher reported on the highlights from Chief Hartmann's monthly report. He noted that the Fireboat Marine 1 will be transferred to Newburyport MA on October 15, 2019.

b. Police Report: See attached.

Selectman Stewart reported the highest volume incidents for the month of September: 42 building checks, and 66 traffic enforcement.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Selectman Stewart made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Maher. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

BJ Riordan Secretary.

Attachments:

- A. Fire Dept. Monthly Report for September 2019
- B. Police Dept. Monthly report for September 2019.