

**Selectmen's Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday October 15, 2020**  
**Harpswell Town Office**  
**Via Zoom**  
**Approved October 29, 2020**

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:** Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

**Selectmen Present:** Chairman Kevin E. Johnson, Selectman David I. Chipman and Selectperson Jane G. Covey

**Staff Present:** Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator; Terri Sawyer, Deputy Town Administrator; Mark Eyerman, Town Planner; Debbie Turner, Assessor's Agent.

Members of the Board and staff were participating by Zoom. The meeting was also being broadcast live on Harpswell Community Television and live streamed. The Chair read aloud the procedure for how members of the public could participate; such instructions were also included on the published agenda and on the website.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda:** The agenda was accepted as written.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Selectmen's Announcements:** Chairman Johnson announced that the Select Board meeting is on the Zoom platform because the Select Board meeting room is set up for absentee voting, which is laborious to set up and take down.
4. **Town Administrator's Report:** Administrator Eiane encouraged residents to vote. If residents wish to vote absentee in-person, the Town office has a wonderful set up where voters can track their ballot. If voters wish to vote in-person, they may do so on November 3, at the Harpswell Community School on Route 24. Polls will be open from 8:00am-8:00pm. The Household Hazardous Waste Day is full, the next event will likely be held in the spring. There will be a medication collection event at the Town Office on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> from 10-2, where you can drop off unused medications (for humans or pets).
5. **Consent Agenda:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to accept the consent agenda [approved the October 15 minutes; approve the 2020 audit engagement letter as amended (remove Other Services section); authorize warrant #42 in the amount of \$988,711.21 and payroll warrant #41 in the amount of \$22,417.96]. Motion passed, 3-0.
6. **Abatement Request Map 21, Lot 11:** Debbie Turner, Assessors Agent, reported that Ryan and Nathania Walsh requested an abatement of \$1,363.48 in taxes and \$202,300 in assessed value. After reviewing the data, including the assessed value being below the purchase price, other neighborhood data and recent sales, the assessment was considered equitable with other similar parcels, supporting the assessment. She also indicated the

State audits the Town's sales and assessments and has rated the Town between 89% - 98% of market value. The State recommends re-evaluations when municipalities fall below 70%. The Assessing Office recommends the Board of Assessors deny the abatement request. Ryan Walsh, owner, called in to discuss that the surrounding properties are assessed under what they should be and he feels that the Town should perform a re-evaluation. Where the surrounding properties don't have up-to-date values and they were used to assess his property, he feels that the assessment is incorrect. If the Board denies the abatement, Walsh may appeal to Cumberland County. Chairman Johnson moved, seconded by Selectman Chipman, to deny the abatement request. Motion passed, 3-0.

- 7. Mitchell Field Waterfront Options:** Planner Mark Eyerman stated that the long-term vision for the waterfront at Mitchell Field has included developing a replacement dock facility for the Navy Pier and a boat launch. This vision was created by the 2007 Master Plan and has evolved and been refined in various documents since then. To accomplish this vision the Town has been setting aside money in the Mitchell Field Capital Reserve Account to use as local match for grants. The Town applied for and received two MaineDOT SHIP Grants for part of the cost of a Town Dock and a boat launch. The recent bids for the construction of the Town Dock showed that the currently available Town and State funding is inadequate to complete both projects in the near-term without significant additional funding. Eyerman discussed various options to complete the projects, while maintaining the focus of providing opportunities for boating in order to retain grant funding. The Board discussed the possibility of combining the projects – the boat launch and dock – into one project. The Board agreed that there is a need for further discussion with Maine DOT. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to combine the boat launch and dock projects. Motion passed, 3-0. Administrator Eiane added that voters will have an opportunity to weigh in as the project progresses.
- 8. 2021 Budget Guidelines:** Administrator Eiane reviewed the process whereby Town Meeting was postponed due to COVID-19, but then there was a public hearing, where phone calls were taken, questions submitted virtually, and in July, votes were cast by secret ballot. Looking ahead at 2021, Eiane stated that with current COVID-19 trends, a traditional, indoor Town Meeting in March is not likely to be feasible. Eiane and Treasurer Sawyer discussed alternatives and recommended that in March, the election of officers be held, as normal, but the budget and ordinance amendments, etc., be handled in June, at the same time as the school vote, by secret ballot. The vote would be prefaced with a public hearing, details to be determined later. Eiane asked the Board to offer future guidance on any operational changes in services, cost of living wage adjustment, and Town capital plans. Selectwoman Covey added that in the operation budget that the Town look at prioritizing technological needs, especially as COVID continues to change the way we operate at the Town level. Covey also added that interest rates are low right now, and as construction costs continue to increase, it may be costly to delay construction projects, referencing the dock and boat launch project at Mitchell Field as an example.

- 9. Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Sawyer summarized the Treasurer's report for the month of September. (Please see attached report).
- 10. Accept Donations:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to accept the following donations: Janet Davis, \$50 heating; Edward and Laurie Blain, \$100 Bandstand; Kristi Eiane, \$100 Cliff Trail; Constance Tassinari, \$50 Bandstand; Linda Strickland, \$100 for Bridge, Anonymous, \$100 Bridge, David Ellis, \$20 Cliff Trail, Kristin Silady, \$50 Cliff Trail; Anonymous, \$10 Bridge, David Chipman, \$100 Bridge, Jeanie Rubio, \$100 Bridge, Karen Tcheyan, \$50 for Bridge and William Perkins, \$2,500 Cliff Trail. Donations totaled \$3,330. Motion passed, 3-0.
- 11. Public Comment:** None.
- 12. Other business:** Administrator Eiane stated that a couple members of the Energy and Technology Committee need to have their appointments updated. Eiane recommended James Bebarsky's appointment run through April 30, 2023. Also, Eiane recommended Jeremy Jones, who missed his official appointment due to COVID-19 shut down, be appointed until April 30, 2021. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to approve both appointments. Motion passed, 3-0.
- 13. Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayla Matthews  
Recording Secretary

Attachments: Treasurer's Report