

Select Board Meeting Minutes
May 09, 2024
Harpswell Town Office
Approved 5.23.24

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

Selectmen Present: Chairman Kevin Johnson, Selectman David I. Chipman, Selectman Jane Covey

Staff Present: Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator; Terri Gaudet, Deputy Town Administrator/Treasurer

1. **Adoption of the Agenda:** The agenda was adopted with item 16 moved to 18.5, consent agenda add two items and address items separately, and two items to other business.
2. **Public Comment: None**
3. **Select Board's Announcements: None**
4. **Town Administrator's Report:** Administrator Eiane reported that Ben Stuart Arborist has been cleaning up the debris along Town roads from the storms this year and the cost is going to exceed \$5,000. The Board concurred that they would approve once a final figure is known. It is estimated around \$10,000. Administrator Eiane also requested that members of the Board consider joining the interview teams for the Communications Specialist position, the Town Planner position and companies for the revaluation project. Selectman Chipman volunteered to join the interview team for the Communications Specialist, Selectman Covey for the Town Planner and Chairman Johnson for the revaluation project.
5. **Consent Agenda: 1) Approval of the Minutes.** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to approve the minutes of 4-11-24 and 4-25-24. Motion passed 3-0. **2) Consider Use of Special Revenue Fund for Recreation:** Deputy Administrator Gaudet reported that the Recreation Director needed to have repairs made to the ballfield before the season opened and is requesting the use of up to \$5,000 for work already done by Willie C. and Sons (donated approximately \$4,000 in labor) and purchased equipment, and materials needed for volunteers to build a new dug out. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize the use of up to \$5,000 pending approval from the Recreation Committee. Motion passed 3-0. **3) Approval of Ambulance Repair and use of funds from the Emergency Vehicles Reserve:** Deputy Administrator Gaudet reported that in 2023 the voters had approved \$15,000 to repair corrosion on the ambulance. Those funds were carried forward. The repair work has been done and the cost was \$20,286.68, therefore she recommended use of \$5,286.68 from the Emergency Vehicles Reserve. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize the use of the reserve. Motion passed 3-0. **4) Authorization of the Warrants:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize Warrant 19 in the amount of \$1,082,937.00, payroll warrant #18 in the amount of \$27,112.80 and payroll warrant #18a in the amount of \$425.32]. Motion passed 3-0.
6. **6:15 Public Hearing: For Quahog Bay Conservation Closure Request.** The public hearing was opened at 6:24 pm. Deputy Administrator Gaudet reported that the request to close Quahog Bay to harvesting from August 1, 2024 to December 1, 2024 came from the Marine Resource Committee. Chairman Johnson reported that this was a conservation measure that worked well last year. No one

was present to speak at the hearing, Chairman Johnson closed the hearing at 6:24 pm. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to close Quahog Bay from August 1 through December 1, 2024. Motion passed 3-0.

7. **Request to Rebuild Wharf on Town Property Near Holbrook Street, Map 62, Lot 156.** Administrator Eiane reported that the wharf owned by Frank Bichrest had been approved by the Select Board in 1991 to be built off town property. The commercial fishing wharf had been destroyed in the January storm. Mr. Bichrest would like to rebuild the wharf in the same footprint and one foot higher. She reported that the Town's counsel recommended a temporary approval pending all permits and approval of authority for a multi-year lease by the June 15, 2024 Special Town Meeting. Roger Allard and Ben Wallace spoke in favor of the wharf and felt it should be grandfathered. Deputy Administrator Gaudet stated that a multi-year lease, if approved, would protect the interests of the Bichrest family. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to grant provisional right, title and interest to allow Francis M. Bichrest to re-build a wharf, in the same location and of the same footprint, being one-foot higher, subject to all permits being obtained before construction and to undertake any construction at his own risk until the Select Board, being duly authorized by the Town Meeting, is able to execute a multi-year lease with the owner. Motion passed 3-0.
8. **Aquaculture Working Group Draft Mission Statement and Draft Letter to Dept. of Marine Resources:** Administrator Eiane read the proposed mission statement to the Board. Selectman Covey recommended the Board consider the working group have 7-9 members representing various stake holders, including a shellfish harvester, an aquaculture owner, a lobsterman, a member of the Harbor and Waterfront Committee, and a member of the Marine Resources Committee. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to accept the edited Draft of the mission statement dated May 9, 2024, and to appoint 7 members to the Aquaculture Working Group. Motion passed 3-0. Selectman Covey moved, seconded by Selectman Chipman to authorize the letter to the Maine Department of Marine Resources, with the edits discussed at this meeting. Motion passed 3-0.
9. **Committee Appointments:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to appoint Anne Caldwell as associate to the Conservation Commission, Jerry Leeman and Jason Hillman as associates on the Harbor and Waterfront Committee, Scott Gill as a regular member and Mark Weaver as associate member to the Recreation Committee. Motion passed 3-0.
10. **Request for Use of Mitchell Field for Memorial Service:** Deputy Administrator Gaudet reported that the daughter of Robert Modr, a Harpswell resident who was instrumental in constructing the bandstand at Mitchell Field, was requesting the use of the bandstand on July 14, 2024 for a memorial concert in Bob's honor. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize the use of Mitchell Field and to waive the fee. Motion passed 3-0.
11. **Draft Letter to Harpswell Community Broadcasting Corp. (HCBC) Board of Directors:** Administrator Eiane reviewed the letter inviting the Board of HCBC to meet with the Select Board and proposed dates of May 30, 2024 or June 6, 2024 from 4:30 to 6:00. She reported that the contract and last two memorandum of understandings would be included. Administrator Eiane stated the Board received public comment from Gary Vincent with suggested additions to the letter; the Board declined to make changes. Selectman Covey and Chairman Johnson concurred to send the letter requesting the meeting.

12. **Transfer Station Fee Increase for Reclaim:** Deputy Administrator Gaudet, reported that the cost of reclaim had increased and that the Solid Waste Manager was recommending an increase from \$33 per ton to \$35 per ton. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize the increase. Motion passed 3-0.
13. **Letter of Support for the Orr's/Bailey Island Fire Dept. Grant Application:** Deputy Administrator Gaudet reported that the Orr's/Bailey Island Fire Department was applying for a Project Canopy grant to protect its ash trees. Mary Ann Nahf from the Conservation Commission reported that arborist Jeff Gillis would be injecting the trees to eliminate ash bore. The first application would last two years. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to authorize a letter of support. Motion passed 3-0.
14. **Little Mark Island and Monument Update:** Administrator Eiane reported that the National Park Service (NPS) had reviewed the joint application from the Presumpscot Foundation and the Town. She reported that the NPS was seeking a guarantee, in the event that the Presumpscot Foundation defaulted on its obligations, based on current conditions that the Board would bring stewardship, along with its financial obligation, to Town meeting to be voted upon. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey that in the hypothetical situation where The Presumpscot Foundation at some point in the future defaulted in its obligations to the federal government relative to Little Mark Island and Monument, and the Town had the opportunity to step into those rights and obligations, including stewardship, it would be the recommendation of this Select Board to the Town Meeting voters that same should be approved. This is based on conditions as they are presently understood, but future conditions cannot be certain. Motion passed 3-0.
15. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Gaudet reported on the Town's finances as of April 30, 2024. [see attached].
16. **Moved to 18.5: Executive Session Pursuant to 1 MRS §405(6)(A) Re: Personnel Evaluation:** The Board entered Executive Session at 6:58 pm. The Select Board returned to open session at approximately 7:45 pm. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to approve the increase [3.2% plus 1%] budgeted for the Town Administrator. Motion passed 3-0.
17. **Public Comment:** None
18. **Other Business: Re-appointment of Frank Hilton as Deputy Fire Warden:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to re-appoint Frank Hilton as Deputy Fire Warden. Motion passed 3-0. **Set start time of June 15, 2024 Special Town Meeting.** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to set the start time of the June 15, 2024 special Town Meeting at 10:00 am. Motion passed 3-0. The Board discussed considering a date for the non-taxpayer residents in early July. A date will be chosen at a future meeting. Selectman Covey reminded voters that May 16, 2024 at 6:00 pm was the budget meeting for MSAD75. The budget voted on at that meeting will in turn be voted on June 11, 2024.
19. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm without objection.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ronda Peek
Recording Secretary