

TOWN OF MADISON - PUBLIC NOTICE

The Inhabitants of the Town of Madison are hereby notified of a public meeting. The time, place and purpose of which are as follows:

MINUTES BOARD OF SELECTMEN EAST MADISON FIRE STATION February 27, 2017 6:30 p.m.

- A. **Salute to the flag:** Meeting called to order at 6:30pm
- B. **Roll Call:** Selectman Al Veneziano, Paul Fortin, Mike Edgerly and Ronald Moody were present. Selectmen Jack Ducharme was not in attendance. Town Manager Tim Curtis, Road Commissioner Glen Mantor and Sheriff Dale Lancaster were also present.
- C. **Consent Agenda:** Warrants Dated: #22 (2/14/17 - \$212,203.94); Payroll Registers: #7 (2/16/17 - \$14,691.91); #8 (2/23/17 - \$ 15,145.54): Motion to approve by Mr. Fortin, seconded by Mr. Edgerly. Motion carries 4-0.
- D. **Discuss acceptance of meeting minutes of January 23, 2017:** Motion to approve by Mr. Fortin, seconded by Mr. Edgerly. Motion carries 4-0.
- E. **Old business** (Selectmen's Concerns from immediately preceding meeting): None
- F. **Items of Communication:** Town Manager Curtis updated the Board on the status of the abatement request from Madison Paper. The Town Office received notice today that the Chair of the State Board of Property Tax Review has requested a pre-hearing phone conference on March 15th, at which time attorney's for Madison Paper will be asked to provide supporting documentation for their request. The Town Manager and Assessor's Agent Shirley Bartlett will be on the call. The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Assessors is Monday March 27th.

The Madison Appeals Board met last Monday February 20th to hear a request from Roy's Waterpark to grant a variance for the number of required parking spaces. The board voted 5-0 to allow Roy's to operate with 96 spaces compared to the 239 spaces required in the current version of the Site Review Ordinance.

The Madison Planning Board met with Chris Huck, a planner with Kennebec Valley Council of Governments to review changes to the Site Review process. Mr. Huck will be working with the Planning Board over the next several weeks on the updates at no additional cost to the Town beyond the dues already paid to KVCOG.

Bee Line Cable has notified the Town that there will be \$5.11 increase to Basic Cable Rates.

The Town Manager has reviewed a quote from Computer Improvements to install security cameras and looks to the Board for direction. The Town Office has also purchased door height markers and continues to have safety training. The Sheriff's department is also working on some training in that regard. Selectman Moody asked how many cameras in the quote, the Town Manager said four but the exact location of each camera was yet to be determined. Selectman Fortin asked about the quality of the cameras, the Town Manager said they were not as high end as the previous quote. The consensus of the Board was to go back to the original quote from K-Tronics and get an apples to apples comparison for installation in the new fiscal year.

The State Valuations for 2017 have been released and Madison's valuation increased from \$354M last year to \$358M this year. The Town Manager noted that these valuations run two years behind and that the school funding purposes the state uses the average of 2014, 2015 and 2016 which is \$448M.

Madison's Code Enforcement Officer Bob Dunphy provided the public with the updated requirements for building permits, and the Town Manager shared an example of a rental inspection that the CEO did on a property in Town which needs a significant amount of work. The Town Office will try to send copies of the new requirements to builders in the area to help spread the word.

IGS Solar who owns the panels on Madison Electric's property has given notice that they intend to file applications with DEP to construct more panels at the business park site. A copy of the application will be on file at the Town Office.

The Town Manager reported the revenue collection is running fairly well which allows the Town to make the full payment to the school district for February. Last year the Town split the payment in order for revenues to build back up in March when second half tax payments were due.

G. New Business

1. **Department Head Reports (Highway, Fire, Police):** Road Commissioner Glen Mantor updated the Board on the status of the crew and the equipment so far this winter. It has been harder than other years due to the number of hours that plow drivers have had to put in. Town Manager Curtis noted that the overtime budget is 85% spent with four months to go in the fiscal year. The Town budgeted \$60,000 for salt and that is overspent by about \$3,000. Mr. Moody asked if the equipment repairs were because the equipment was too old, the Road Commissioner said it was primarily the hardness of the ice and snow in the early winter that caused a lot of the initial damage. The Town Manager estimated that the cost to repairs so far this year is over \$40,000. Mr. Mantor also explained that one of the Highway Department's seasonal workers has found another job and there will be a need to fill that position before the fall.

Fire Chief Don French provided a report for January activities (33 calls in 31 days). He also asked if the Board would approve his restitution form that allows the department to recoup some expenses from insurance at the following rates: \$150 per truck on scene, \$100 per hour for the Rescue Vehicle, \$100 per hour for the Rescue Boat and \$20 per hour per person. Motion to approve by Mr. Fortin, seconded by Mr. Moody. Motion carries 4-0.

Sheriff Lancaster was on hand to answer any questions about the January report from the Madison Division. The Sheriff provided detail information on calls from 2016 which differentiated calls that are proactive such as building and school checks and calls that are initiated by residents.

2. **Discuss Police Budget 2017/2018:** Town Manager Curtis had asked the Sheriff to prepare two policing models for the Board to consider for the upcoming fiscal year. For two years the Town had been paying for 24 hour coverage with a five deputy model, but due to turn over the Madison Division had only worked with 3 to 4 deputies and only for a few months was fully staffed. The Town Manager wanted to see what the budget would be for a 4 deputy model that had staff from 6am to midnight and call in from midnight to 6am.

The Sheriff and County Finance Director Patrick Dolan explained that the budget for a 4 deputy system would be \$449,000 and for 5 deputies at 24 hour coverage would cost \$500,000. The Sheriff was confident that the SO could make both models work for Madison.

Selectman Moody cautioned against saving money on emergency personnel. He was in favor of keeping the five deputy model for full 24 hour coverage and making sure there was a good response time in the case of an overnight call.

Chairman Veneziano said that both options should be vetted through the Advisory Board and more input should be heard from residents as to what type of police coverage they want to pay for. Selectman Fortin said that with the changing status of the Town's tax base the residents must consider alternatives and he thanked the Sheriff and the Town Manager for creating options. Mr. Fortin asked what the budget would have been like if the Town had kept its previous policing model with a chief and municipal police officers. Town Manager Curtis estimated that by this time that budget with a cruiser would have cost the town approximately \$150,000 more than the Sheriff's 5 deputy model. Selectman Fortin said the Sheriff had done an outstanding job providing policing services and saving money.

Selectman Edgerly asked the Sheriff what the impact would be over time if the Town chose a 4 deputy model. Sheriff Lancaster said that both models will work, it's up to the people and the Selectmen to decide what kind of police coverage they want in Madison.

It was the consensus of the Board to continue this discussion into the budget talks in March. Town Manager Curtis reminded the Board that after the first year of the contract the County returned unused funds to the Town and he anticipates some funds to be returned at the end of this contract year. Those moneys are set aside for policing coverage and the Town Manager recommends putting at least \$30,000 against the policing budget to reduce the amount raised by taxation. Selectman Moody asked if those funds were designated for a cruiser. Mr. Curtis clarified that the Town has capital money carried forward for a cruiser in 2018 over and above what was returned from the first year contract with the County.

- 3. Discuss Community Organization Requests:** The Town Manager asked for the Board's direction on new Service Organization requests. The Town has received 10 requests totaling \$42,000 from agencies who are headquartered outside of Madison. Since 2014 the Selectmen and Advisory Board have only approved the few requests from local organizations. The Town Manager explained the different groups supported by the Town budget, and that he has sent a letter to the 10 new requests explaining the Town's difficult financial situation. Mr. Moody said it seems pretty simple to him that since the Town has not been able to afford funding these additional requests for the last two years, it cannot afford to fund them this year. Mr. Moody also asked the Town Manager to look into the funding that the Town provides to the American Legion for flags to see if there are any state requirements attached to that provision.

Selectmen Fortin asked that the Town consider additional funding for Lakewood Theatre noting that it is an economic and tourism attraction unique to Madison and should be supported by the Town. Mr. Fortin made a motion to dedicate \$5,000 annually from TIF funds to go toward the operating expenses of the Lakewood Theatre, seconded by Mr. Edgerly. Motion carries 3-1 with Mr. Moody opposed.

- 4. Review foreclosed properties/quit claim deeds:** The deadline for 2014 tax payments was February 21st and as of that date, four properties came to the Town through foreclosure. In each case the property owner has contacted the Town Office and is making payment arrangements. In the cases where properties need to be maintained the Town Manager said he would follow through with the owners in the spring. The property owner from 5 Locust Street was at the meeting and asked the Board if he could make two payments to pay off his 2014 taxes of approximately \$1,100. He would pay a payment on March 3rd and another on April 3rd, 2017. Afterwards he committed to making payments of \$200 per month to catch up. The Board was in agreement with this plan.

Mr. Curtis asked the board for direction on the two vacant properties the Town acquired last year (Sugarloaf Lane, and 51 John Street). The consensus of the Board was to ask a local realtor to give an idea of what the properties would sell for and report back.

One property at 888 Lakewood Road has changed owners and all the back taxes have been paid. Motion by Mr. Fortin to issue a quit claim deed for 888 Lakewood Road to Letitia Chapman, seconded by Mr. Moody. Motion carries 4-0.

5. **Discuss recommendations for Retail Marijuana Ordinance Committee:** The Town Manager shared the list of names of people who had expressed interest in serving on the committee. Since much of the regulation for retail marijuana was still to be debated and discussed by the State, the Town Manager recommended that this committee focus on gathering information and surveying residents. A sample survey was discussed that could be given to voters in the June election. The consensus of the Board was to have the committee work toward that end. Mr. Moody commented that if the President intervenes and rolls back some of the decisions made at the state levels to legalize marijuana that could solve many of the issues for Maine municipalities.

6. **Discuss Matching Grant Program:** The Town Manager said that some inquiries have been made as to whether the Town will offer another program this spring. If the board wanted to applications could be returned as of April 19, 2017. Mr. Curtis suggested a few modifications to the form, to include language that said awards would only be paid to applicants who were current on their taxes, and that there should be some sort of pro-rated pay back clause for businesses that receive grants but go out of business within a few years. Mr. Fortin was not in favor of the Town Office chasing funds from unsuccessful businesses.

The Town Manager also expressed concern about the funding for the program since it comes from TIF funds. The spending on salt and road work has drawn the TIF balance down. As a result, Mr. Curtis would only recommend spending \$25,000 this spring for the Matching Grant Program. Chairman Veneziano said he did not think it would be prudent to spend more TIF money on the program this year and recommended putting the program on hold for another year. The rest of the board members agreed.

7. **Discuss Personal Property Write Offs:** At the last Board of Assessors Meeting several personal property accounts were reviewed from businesses that has closed but the accounts were not deleted. A motion from the Board of Selectmen was needed to write off the accounts. Mr. Fortin moved to write off accounts 473, 474, 472, 379, 476, 483, 459, 450, and 471 for a total of \$236.28, including fees and interest, seconded by Mr. Moody, motion carries 4-0.

The Town Manager showed a note from the owner of the Oak & Pine Cabinet shop that showed he closed his business in May of 2015. He was charged 2015 and 2016 personal property taxes for a total of \$211.84. Motion from Mr. Moody to write off \$211.84, including fees and interest for account #224, seconded by Mr. Fortin. Motion carries 4-0.

The Town Manager reviewed a list of several year's worth of unpaid personal property taxes from Abnaki Campground going back to 2009. Mr. Curtis suggested that the board write off the 2009 and 2010 taxes with fees and interest for a total of \$340.64 and allow the Town to take the property owner to Small Claims Court to at least establish a lien on the property for the remaining. \$881.27.

Selectman Fortin said that the Town should not write off any of this and seek to get as much as they can either directly from the owner or through the court system. The rest of the board agreed.

H. **Selectman Concerns:** Mr. Edgerly asked about the status of the house at 497 Main Street across from the High School. It has been burned out and abandoned for several years. The recent heavy snow had caused the garage to collapse. The Town Manager has been in contact with the attorney that represents the bank and that they hope to have the foreclosure process complete in 45 days or so. At that time there will be an owner (the bank), that the Town can petition to have the building torn down. Mr. Edgerly asked that the Town Manager bring this issue back to the Board in 45 days for an update.

Chairman Veneziano passed out copies of a performance review worksheet that the Board should complete for the Town Manager's annual evaluation which will be scheduled for an upcoming meeting in executive session.

I. **Citizen Concerns:** East Madison resident Cathy Edgerly asked what the state was going to do about the dip in the road at the end of White Schoolhouse Road. The Town Manager said that DOT had notified the

town that road work would be done there and on East Madison Road this summer. The Highway department will document the problem with some pictures and that information will be forwarded to Maine DOT this spring.

J. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm