

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 August 14, 2017 6:30 p.m.

- A. **Salute to the flag:** Meeting was called to order at 630pm.
- B. **Roll Call:** Selectmen Al Veneziano, Jack Ducharme, Paul Fortin, George Elias and Ron Moody were in attendance. Town Manager Tim Curtis, Assessors Agent Shirley Bartlett, Town Clerk Kathy Estes, Finance Director Tammy Carrier and Road Commissioner Glen Mantor were also present.
- C. **Consent Agenda: Warrants Dated:** # 39 (Year End 6/30/17 - \$13,913.63); # 2 (7/24/17 - \$ 560,033.42); # 3 (7/24/17 - \$1,806.70). Payroll Registers: # 30 (7/27/17 \$13,232.96); # 31 (8/3/17 - \$13,671.11); # 32 (8/10/17 - \$12,034.48): Motion to approve by Mr. Moody, seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 5-0.

Game of Chance VFW Harvell/Bishop Post 7865: Motion to approve a game of chance (Beano) for Sept and Oct by Mr. Elias, seconded by Mr. Moody. Motion carries 5-0.

Quit Claim Deed 1676 Lakewood Road: Motion to approve a quit claim deed for Jeanie Hachey for the property located at 1676 Lakewood Road by Mr. Moody, seconded by Mr. Elias. Town Manager Curtis explained that all the 2014 back taxes have been paid and payments are being made on the remaining taxes. Motion carries 5-0. Town Manager Curtis noted that there are only 2 properties remaining in 2014 tax acquired. One is 5 Locust Street which the occupants have been served with an eviction notice for August 19th. The other property has a balance of less than \$20 and payments have been made every other month.

Town Manager Curtis brought two properties to the Board's attention that needed abatements due to discrepancies discovered during the 30 Day Lien Notice process. Account #347 at 1408 East Madison Road has been taxed for 16 acres of property and it only has 10 acres. Account #2896 is a mobile home at 58 John Street that has been repossessed and is no longer there. Motion by Mr. Moody to approve abatements resulting in a tax reduction of \$180.60 for Account #347 and a tax reduction of \$21.90 for Account #2896, seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 5-0.

Motion by Mr. Elias to waive fees and interest for account numbers 347 and 2896, seconded by Mr. Fortin. Motion carries 5-0.

- D. **Discuss acceptance of meeting minutes of July 24, 2017:** Motion to approve by Mr. Ducharme, seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 5-0.
- E. **Old Business (Selectmen's Concerns from immediately preceding meeting):** Selectman Moody asked about the mowing and/or bush hogging the property adjacent to the Forest Hills Cemetery. Road Commissioner Mantor said the plan is to use the Town's roadside mower at the end of the fall. Mr. Moody also asked about repairs to Preble Avenue in front of the VFW. The Road Commissioner explained that would be part of the paving projects scheduled to begin in mid-September.
- F. **Items of Communication:** Town Manager Curtis received the revised School Budget from the MSAD59 Superintendent's Office. The new figure reflects the \$133,000 passed on from additional state aid to education.

Maine Revenue has released preliminary valuations for 2018. The Town of Madison valuation drops \$17M to \$341,850,000.00. These numbers are based on actual 2016 data.

Recently property owners on Sugarloaf Drive off Blackwell Hill Road have asked if the Town would take over maintenance of the road and bring it up to Town standards. The Road Commissioner has estimated the type of work that it would require, and the Town Manager is trying to get an estimate. Since the Town owns property at the end of Sugarloaf Drive due to tax foreclosure, the Town Manager says he could see that the Town could share the cost of upgrading the road with the other property owners, but he did not see where the Town was liable for all the costs. There is a clause in the Subdivision Ordinance that allows the Planning Board to require the developer to take out a performance bond until the road is built to Town standards. But in this case no bond was required and the road has not been built up. Mr. Moody asked if the Planning Board was aware of this situation, Mr. Curtis said the Planning Board has not had a meeting this summer, but when they do he plans to bring this to their attention.

Mr. Fortin asked when the Sugarloaf Drive subdivision was approved. The Town Manager said May or June of 2005. Mr. Fortin and Mr. Veneziano said there must be some way to ensure that approvals of the Planning Board are enforced, and wondered if the Town should have the subdivision reviewed by an attorney. The Town Manager recommended waiting to hear a quote for upgrading the road before any legal counsel is brought in. The issue of whether or not the Town would accept a road for maintenance would have to be taken at Town Meeting.

Assessing Agent Shirley Bartlett has reviewed figures and is recommending a valuation of approximately \$6.5M for the solar field owned by IGS Solar. IGS has a contract with Madison Electric Works to purchase all the power generated by the solar field. In addition MEW agreed to allow IGS to pass the property taxes through to the rate payers. MEW Board of Directors member Richard Bartlett explained that the solar field has only been generating power for about 5 months and the MEW board is concerned that the amount of tax is not in proportion to the income generated for IGS.

Mr. Bartlett said one of the biggest savings to MEW customers is that the power generated from the solar field does not receive the additional ISO New England charges of \$.025 per kilowatt. Mr. Fortin asked if MEW's Board was concerned about ISO lobbying to make changes to the legislation in order to be able to assess a fee for solar projects. Mr. Bartlett said he didn't think that would happen. Mr. Fortin is concerned that ISO will find a way to get more revenue from the growing number of solar projects in the state.

The Town Manager spoke with DOT last week regarding work on East Madison Road. According to the Dixfield Office the work crews should move down to East Madison after finishing work in Brighton and Kingsbury Plantation. That work should begin in the next two weeks.

At the previous meeting Selectman Moody had asked about an abandoned property at 663 White Schoolhouse Road. The Town Manager is researching to determine if a bank has foreclosed on the property. Currently there are two years-worth of back taxes to be paid.

Each year an elected official is selected to serve on the KVCOG General Assembly. Selectman Ducharme has served for the past two years and the Town Manager recommends that he continue, if agreeable. Mr. Ducharme agreed to serve.

The installation of the playground is complete at the Old Point School in the area that will be known as the Fortin Family Park.

G. New Business

1. **Department Head Reports (Fire, Police, Highway):** Written reports from the Fire Chief and Sheriff's Office were accepted as information. Mr. Moody commented that he felt that despite the incident that

happened on the Russell Road in July, the report indicates that the overall crime rate and safety of the Town is good.

Road Commissioner Glen Mantor updated the Board to the prep work being done on River Road for paving in September as well as some work to be done to replace culverts on Lower Mills Road.

The in-town spraying of grass on the curbs has been completed. If the Town wanted to expand the program the Road Commissioner would put together a plan and put out for bids. Currently the spraying is done on Main Street and the Avenues (Weston & Old Point). Mr. Ducharme said he was concerned about the newly repaired sidewalks not being treated and he recommended looking into more spraying as preventive maintenance.

Mr. Moody asked how much money the Town had been averaging upgrading sidewalks. The Road Commissioner and Town Manager estimated about \$70,000 had been spent in the last 3 years, the majority of which was on Main Street and Weston Ave. Mr. Moody said it is money well spent, and it is worth the effort to continue to maintain them.

2. **Discuss Recommendations for Town-wide revaluation:** Town Manager Curtis and Ms. Bartlett had reviewed the proposals for a Town-Wide revaluation of properties, called references and met with two of the three candidates. At this time their recommendation was to reject all of the proposals on the grounds that the costs exceeded expectations. Motion by Mr. Moody to reject the proposals from Hamlin Associates, RJD Appraisals and Maine Assessment and Appraisal Services, seconded by Mr. Fortin. The Town Manager noted that the Town of Skowhegan has just completed a revaluation with a cost less than the bids received for Madison. Mr. Moody asked if Skowhegan was satisfied with their project. The Town Manager said he would be in touch with the Skowhegan Town Manager and report back. Motion carries 5-0. The Board recommended that the Town Manager and Assessors agent look into a plan to do more of the work in house and report back to the Board.

The Town Manager asked what the Board thought about how to raise the additional funds needed. The Town has \$115,000 raised and all the bids were in excess of \$225,000. The consensus of the Board was to have the Town Manager bring back options for funding the project.

3. **Discuss Recommendations from MBA Redevelopment Committee (Housing):** Town Manager Curtis introduced members of the Madison Business Alliance Redevelopment Committee. Local Business owner Rhonda Emerson recently formed the committee and asked the Town Manager what the local economic development goals were. Town Manager Curtis said addressing the needs of the areas housing stock was a big priority. As such the committee began working on an RFP to be sent to developers for ideas on how best to utilize certain parcels of land within the Town. Committee members Stuart Jablon with Backyard Farms, Renee Bristow with R&B Home Center were in attendance with Ms. Emerson.

Mr. Ducharme said he has been concerned about the area's housing stock for quite some time and supported the idea of getting proposals from builders. Ms. Emerson said as a landlord she receives calls every day from people looking for housing and she only has five apartments. Mr. Jablon said his workers also have a hard time finding housing and some travel from as far away as 45 minutes.

Mr. Fortin asked if there was any criteria for affordability in the RFP. Mr. Curtis said that one of the requirements is for the developer to perform a market study using the link provided that shows all the pertinent information for Madison (rental prices, home values, median income, etc).

Mr. Ducharme asked if there were TIF dollars available to support these projects. The Town Manager said there is language in the TIF to allow for money to be spent to alleviate blight and for infrastructure improvements. Further discussion should be had on what the Town can do to stimulate more housing development.

Mr. Moody asked how many new units would help Backyard Farms workers. Mr. Jablon said two years ago they tried to help approximately 15 workers to find housing, and this problem currently hinders their workforce. The problem is lack of availability. Mr. Moody asked if local contractors will be able to put in a proposal. The Town Manager said that the committee plans to ask local building supply companies for a list of their contractors and send out packets to as many as they can.

Motion by Mr. Fortin to approve the Housing Proposal and to move forward with the RFP, seconded by Mr. Ducharme. Motion carries 5-0.

4. **Discuss November ballot language for Marijuana:** At the previous meeting the consensus of the Board was to have a ballot question on marijuana for the November Election. Town Manager said after speaking with Clerk Kathy Estes, the Selectmen have the authority do so, but she said it must be simple and in a yes and no format.

Kathy said a ballot question is different from a survey, so the Town would be held to the decision on the ballot, even if it passes 51% to 49%. As such if the Town voted to prohibit retail marijuana use then the Selectmen would be required to create a prohibition ordinance and take it to Town Meeting within a certain time frame.

Mr. Fortin was concerned that the State would override what the Town decided. The Town Manager said the legislation passed in November allows for all Towns to decide what to do on a local level.

Mr. Ducharme asked if the Board should consider a question that would allow for marijuana business to be regulated by the Planning Board. The Town Manager said to utilize the Planning Board would require building a new framework around the Site Review process. Mr. Curtis referred to two new businesses on Main Street that sell marijuana related products. Those stores do not sell marijuana directly and they would not be affected if the Town voted to prohibit marijuana sales. The consensus of the Board was not to burden the Planning Board with this type of work.

Mr. Veneziano asked when the language would be needed. Ms. Estes said at least 45 days before the November election. The Board meets on August 28 and Sept 11 and they would have the opportunity to workshop some language and make a decision by Sept 11.

- H. **Selectman Concerns:** Mr. Veneziano thanked Mr. Fortin for his family's donation to the new playground at the Old Point School.
- I. **Citizen Concerns:** In regards to the marijuana ballot question, it was mentioned that the wording be positive so a yes means yes and so forth.
- J. **Executive Session to consult with legal counsel pursuant to 1 MRSA 405 (6) (e):** Motion from Selectman Moody to enter executive session, seconded by Mr. Ducharme. Motion carries 5-0. The Board entered executive session at 7:30pm.

The Board came out executive session at 9:13pm. Motion from Mr. Elias to authorize the Town to spend up to \$10,000 to retain the services of Glen Walker to consult on the 2017 valuation of the Eagle Creek hydro-electric dams, and to spend up to \$20,000 to retain the services of Mark Rodriguez to perform an evaluation of Madison Paper Properties as of April 1, 2016, seconded by Mr. Ducharme. Motion carries 5-0.

- K. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:14pm.