

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 1110 EAST MADISON ROAD
October 23, 2017
6:30 p.m.**

- A. **Salute to the flag:** Meeting was called to order at 630pm.
- B. **Roll Call:** Selectmen Paul Fortin, Ronald Moody and George Elias were in attendance. Selectman Jack Ducharme was absent. Board Chair Al Veneziano arrived at 6:55pm. Town Manager Tim Curtis, Road Commissioner Glen Mantor, Code Enforcement Officer Bob Dunphy and Finance Director Tammy Carrier were also in attendance.
- C. **Consent Agenda:** Warrants Dated: #12 (10/9/2017 - \$112,274.01); Payroll Registers: # 41 (10/12/2017 - \$12,672.65); # 42 (10/19/2017 - \$ 9,937.64). Move to approve by Selectman Fortin, seconded by Selectman Moody. Motion carries 3-0.
- Liquor License Application Harvell-Bishop Post 7865 VFW:** Move to approve by Mr. Moody, seconded by Mr. Elias. Town Manager Curtis mentioned that in order expedite the process to allow the VFW to meet deadlines, signatures have already been gathered, but a motion must be approved in a public meeting. Motion carries 3-0.
- D. **Discuss acceptance of meeting minutes of October 9, 2017:** Move to approve by Selectman Elias, seconded by Mr. Fortin. Motion carries 3-0.
- E. **Old Business** (Selectmen's Concerns from immediately preceding meeting): None
- F. **Items of Communication:** Town Manager Curtis informed the Board that a new Deputy had been hired for the Madison Division. Deputy Logan Roberts will replace Tad Nelson who left the Sheriff's Department in June to take a position in Kennebec County.

The Risk Management division of the Maine Municipal Association recently inspected the Communication Tower and the East Madison Fire Station. The results found that both facilities are in good condition with only minor recommendations.

Election Day is Tuesday November 7 with a number of state referendum questions on the ballot, as well as the local referendum on retail marijuana. Absentee ballots are available at the Town Office.

G. **New Business**

1. **Review of FY2017 Financial Audit (RHR Smith):** RHR Smith & Associates representatives Debbie Fitzpatrick and Casey Libby were in attendance to report on the recently completed audit for FY2017. They presented to the Board a summary of revenues and expenditures and fund balances. It was noted that the Town's undesignated fund balance increased by nearly \$400,000.00 as a result of increased revenues and a larger overlay of tax collection. The \$1.4M undesignated fund balance represents almost a 2 month supply. The Town Manager reminded the Board and those in attendance that the Town still has an ongoing abatement appeal from Madison Paper that could cost upwards of \$800,000.00 if the State Board of Property Tax Review were to rule against the Town.

2. **Update Paving Projects:** Road Commissioner Mantor reported that Bard Paving has completed several small paving projects, including a shim on Heald Street and shim on Preble Avenue. The Town Manager said the original contract called for a shim on the first two miles of River Road but after the work was done he and the Road Commissioner discussed adding a 1 inch top coat due to the fact that River Road will receive a lot of heavy truck traffic. Bard Paving has agreed to a not to exceed price of \$87,700.00. The Town Manager said that the Board should approve up to that amount to be paid from TIF funds. Motion to that affect made by Mr. Fortin, seconded by Mr. Elias. Selectman Elias asked about the need for road work further up on River Road where the road drops off to the River. The Road Commissioner said that some work has begun there but the Highway Department will need to make that a priority in the near future. Motion carries. 3-0.

The Town Manager mentioned that he and the Road Commissioner will set aside some time this fall to prioritize road work using the Road Surface Management tool provided by the State.

3. **Public Hearing to determine status of properties at 21, 25 & 29 Naomi Avenue.** Chairman Veneziano opened the public hearing at 6:55pm. Code Enforcement Officer Bob Dunphy has visited the sites at Naomi and found them to be uninhabitable. Matthew Hamrick of Skowhegan, the owner of 21 Naomi said he is in the process of selling it and the person who is buying it is living on the property. Selectman Moody asked the tenant if that was her residence. She said yes and she has a camper on the property that she intends to live in while rehabilitating the property. At this time however, she is living in the house while she is doing some improvements to her camper. The property has no power and as such it is impossible to easily tell if the water or wastewater system works properly.

Mr. Hamrick has applied to have the power restored through Central Maine Power, but Code Enforcement Officer Dunphy has to sign off on a Form 1190 that states the property has the proper permits to move forward. Town Manager Curtis said if the Board takes action to determine the property abandoned then they could issue a notice to correct which could be to either tear down or rehabilitate the building.

Several residents from Naomi Avenue were in attendance who testified that the properties have been abandoned and blighted for several years and that they have been asking the Town to take some action for years.

Chairman Veneizano closed the public hearing on 21 Naomi Avenue at 7:23pm. Selectman Fortin made the motion to declare the property at 21 Naomi Avenue abandoned, seconded by Mr. Moody. Motion carries 5-0. Mr. Fortin made the motion to issue a notice to correct to have the buildings on 21 Naomi Avenue to be torn down and the septic fields returned to a green field status within 90 Days. Seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 4-0.

Furthermore, Mr. Fortin made the motion to have the Town Manager ask the Sheriff's Department to ensure that no one is living at 21 Naomi Ave, seconded by Mr. Elias. Mr. Moody wanted clarification as to whether this was a civil or criminal enforcement on behalf of the Sheriff's Department. The Town Manager would clarify that with the Sheriff. Motion carries 4-0.

Chairman Veneziano opened a public hearing at 7:33 to take input on the status of the properties at 25 and 29 Naomi Avenue. James Whittemore of Moscow, Maine owns both properties. He was in attendance and told the Board that his intentions are to tear down both buildings and create an area where he could place a mobile home. His time frame would be to tear them down next spring/summer. Code Enforcement Officer Dunphy noted that there are current property maintenance violations that need to be cleaned up as soon as possible. The house at 25 Naomi is vacant and there is a tenant at 29 Naomi who has not paid rent and Mr. Whittemore said he will begin the eviction process.

Seeing no further comments, Chairman Veneziano closed the public hearing at 7:40pm. Motion by Mr. Fortin to declare the property at 25 Naomi Avenue abandoned. Seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 4-0.

Mr. Fortin made the motion to issue a notice to correct to have the buildings on 25 Naomi Avenue to be torn down and the septic fields returned to a green field status within 90 Days. Seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 4-0.

Motion by Mr. Fortin to declare the property at 29 Naomi Avenue abandoned. Seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 4-0.

Mr. Fortin made the motion to issue a notice to correct to have the trash cleaned up around 29 Naomi Avenue within 30 days and to have the buildings removed and the septic fields returned to a green field status by May 30, 2018. Seconded by Mr. Elias. Motion carries 4-0.

At 7:45pm Chairman Veneziano called for a brief recess.

The meeting resumed at 7:55pm.

4. **Discuss Town Owned Properties:** Town Manager Curtis reviewed a list of 6 properties. Four properties the Town owns by foreclosure and two that have been cleared from bankruptcy that the Town can now begin the foreclosure process.
 - a. 5 Locust Street. Property has been cleaned up and is stripped on the inside with no appliances or heating system. Town Manager recommends demolition and sell the lot at public auction in the spring. The consensus of the Board was to have the Town Manager get quotes on demolition. The Town Manager will report back at the next meeting.
 - b. 51 John Street & Sugarloaf Lane. The Town has had a local realtor working diligently to sell these properties over the summer. Town Manger recommends including them at an auction in the spring.
 - c. 160 Whittier Farm Road. This property owner has paid nearly \$7500 in back taxes in 2017 but has about \$6000 to ensure coming out of foreclosure. At a meeting on July 10, 2017, the Board had given the property owner until January of 2018 to pay off the back taxes or sell the property. The Town Manager will update the Board on that progress at the end of the year.
 - d. Business Park Drive. This property was mistakenly sold by the Town twice not knowing it was included in bankruptcy. As such there are some costs associated with the property from unwinding those deals. The bankruptcy cleared in May and the Town Manager recommends including the property in the foreclosure process this winter and putting it up for auction in the spring.
 - e. Mallard Road. This property too has been in bankruptcy since 2012. It cleared in May and the Town Manager recommends the same action as Business Park Drive.

Town Manager Curtis noted that on both 5 Locust Street and 51 John Street there are outstanding balances owed to the Sanitary District and he recommended paying those off as an act of cooperation between the Town and the District. Motion by Mr. Fortin to pay the outstanding amount of \$3,805.18 to the Anson Madison Sanitary District plus fees and interest, and the outstanding amount of \$238.86 to Madison Electric Works plus fees and interest, seconded by Mr. Moody. There is approximately \$42,000.00 in an account created by the sale of past tax acquired properties. Motion carries 3-0, Selectman Elias abstained due to his position on the Sanitary District Board of Directors.

There were three properties that the Town had issued Notice to Correct to tear down. The deadline has passed and at 497 Main Street the Town received notice that the bank has stopped the foreclosure process and released the property to the last owners who now live in Indiana and Massachusetts. The Town Manager recommends sending a 30 day notice to those two owners saying that the buildings need to be torn down by November 27th.

The owner of 64 Ward Hill Road has said he will tear down those buildings this week.

The owner of 21 Nathan Street has not responded to the notices and the Town Manager will try to make a personal visit to determine the status of that property.

H. **Selectman Concerns:** None

I. **Citizen Concerns:** Katie Ouillette wanted to announce that the Executive Director of the Skowhegan Area Chamber of Commerce will be having office hours in Madison at the Town Office on the first Wednesday of every month to help local businesses with any development questions they may have.

J. **Executive Session to discuss an economic development matter pursuant to 1 MRSA 405 (6) (c):** Motion to enter executive session by Mr. Fortin, seconded by Mr. Moody. Motion carries 4-0. The Board entered into executive session at 8:12pm.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:40pm with no action taken.

K. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 8:41pm.