

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
May 20, 2020 5:30 pm

Meeting conducted via Zoom

Members: Roberta Mayer, Chairperson; Louis Abbotoni, Mark Hagar, Daryl Fraser and Josh Pinkham

Members Absent : None

Staff Present: Matt Lutkus, Town Manager; Cheryl Pinkham, Town Treasurer; Lynda Letteney, recording secretary (via Zoom)

Others Present: Andrea Lalime-Keushguerian; Lisa Hagen; Haas Tobey; Sue Murphy; James Cosgrove; Richard McLean; Faustine Reny; Adam Reny; Tim Kimpton; Sherry Flint; Claire Berkowitz; Rosemary Moeykens; 2 citizens by phone unidentified; and Evan Houk, Lincoln County News

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge was dispensed with as the meeting was conducted via Zoom.

I. Call to Order:

The Board of Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. **by Chairperson Mayer.**

II. Minutes

On motion (Abbotoni/Fraser) to accept the minutes of the April 5, 2020 meeting **Vote: 5-0-0**

On motion (Abbotoni/Fraser) to accept the minutes of the May 6, 2020 meeting **Vote: 5-0-0**

III. Financial Reports

1. **On motion (Abbotoni/Mayer) to approve Payroll Warrants #67** **Vote: 5-0-0**

2. **On motion (Fraser/Pinkham) to approve Accounts Payable Warrants #68** **Vote: 5-0-0**

3. **On motion (Pinkham/Fraser) to approve Accounts Payable Warrants #69** **Vote: 4-0-1**
 (Hagar abstaining)

IV. Presentation: Downtown Reopening

V. Citizens' Comments and General Correspondence- Downtown Restaurants' Ideas on Reopening Plans-Sue Murphy

Matt stated that at the May 6th meeting the Board discussed possible ways the Town could support the reopening of businesses that have had to suspend business activity or operate on a limited basis due to the pandemic. In talking with business owners, Robin and Matt discussed the possible role the Town could play in assisting with reopening. Ideas included closing Main Street parking spaces to provide for on-street vending and additional pedestrian social distancing. The idea was to do this on weekends in June, providing porta-potties downtown and obtaining electronic signage on Route 1 to help market the outdoor-focused activity. **Susan Murphy**, owner of Cupacity, is making the presentation.

Sue Murphy opened the conversation proposing a pilot of using Main Street for "open market" during the weekends in June. **Mark Hagar** felt June was not realistic and July might be more reasonable. He

would like to see metal barrier gates like they used during Pumpkinfest. He felt the Town needed to look at this for a longer term. He did feel the Town needed to step up to take care of downtown. **Sue** agreed with him. She looks at June as a pilot-iron out kinks. She felt they needed to start someplace and they could do one day a week in June and revisit it. **Mark** said since they rent gates for Pumpkinfest, it might be a good idea to purchase the gates and then rent them to Pumpkinfest and other Community activities. **Lisa Hagen** suggested that since there is limited traffic, maybe cones would work. **Lou Abbotoni** said he did not like the idea of cones, especially if kids were running up and down Main Street. **Mark Hagar** said from past experience, people drive through the cone barriers. **Robin Mayer** replied she liked the idea of purchasing the gates and renting them out. She wanted to bring the discussion back around to what the Town could do to facilitate businesses reopening (i.e. liquor licensing to serve on sidewalk). She felt the particulars were up to the business community to develop and bring a finalized draft to the Board for presentation and action.

Mark Hagar stated that we are a service center and as such, we collect their trash and provide other services. The businesses in turn pay taxes. We should want to help keep the businesses downtown; without tax revenue from them, our services diminish. **Robin Mayer** went back to the idea of including Newcastle as a Twin Village Activity. The governor has extended the emergency until mid-June. If it is not extended beyond that, will there even be a need? **Sue Murphy** said the rules change on a daily basis. With a decrease in tourists, everyone has to work harder and collaborate better to stay relevant. The issue is long term how do we stay in business with a small amount of people.

Josh Pinkham said that as always his concern is safety. He is not in favor of using cones. He would rather see them use Elm Street and Theater Street along the sides of the buildings. He is supportive of the businesses but asked about the businesses not located downtown- how do you take care of them? **Sue Murphy** asked how many people/businesses you see involved. Do we include District 2 and Newcastle? She doesn't know about Newcastle as she hasn't spoken to them yet. She felt they could publicize who and what is open and involved. **Josh** went back to his concern about cones. He also did not like the idea of tying up Main Street. **Robin Mayer** felt it would be hard for a sole proprietor to manage a table and the business inside. **Josh** asked with whom does the liability lie? **Mark Hagar** suggested making Elm Street one-way and to utilize the back buildings – coning off the back area.

Daryl Fraser felt everyone was getting ahead of themselves. Does downtown and/or upper Main Street even want to shift from their business location? With no "back up summer" there is really only a small opportunity. He would like to see set up in front of their own businesses and put out advertising of the event. **Robin Mayer** agreed with Josh that liability was a good point. She felt metal barriers were the best idea. She has talked with Chief Warlick and he saw no problem closing off downtown to parking spaces. It naturally gets people to slow down when the street is closed with barriers to parking. **Sue Murphy** has talked with business owners about liability and working curbside. She is not confident she can keep everyone safe. **Robin** asked for final questions for Lisa or Sue. **Lou Abbotoni** said that he wanted the Chamber and businesses to come back with a well thought out plan. **Robin** said June 3rd was the next meeting and she invited the Chamber to come back with a definite plan/request. Restaurants must provide restrooms. **Sue Murphy** replied the challenge was trying to keep people from coming in just to use the restroom. She would like more guidance from the State, but safety is the common goal.

Robin felt there was no way to keep Porta-potties clean and sanitized. They can be emptied on a regular basis but not necessarily sanitized.

Sue Murphy said it comes down to customers versus just using the bathroom. She felt they still needed some help from the town with some guidance before the next meeting, such as collectively going through a list of all businesses, sending a letter to unify needs, etc. **Robin** said, from her point of view, it would be up to the Chamber and businesses to spearhead this. **Lisa Hagen** said that not all businesses belong to the Chamber. **Sue Murphy** stated that she understood the Board of Selectmen makes the decisions, but the Town needs to help us reach everyone. **Robin** stated that Mark was not in favor of spearheading this. **Mark** spoke to the issue stating he felt they could recoup money spent on purchasing metal gates; as far as porta-potties, that is up to individual businesses to have them or not. He reiterated that they want to help but they won't do everything. **Sue** said she was happy to do the leg work. She fears push back from citizens saying, "Why didn't the Town tell us?" She is happy to work on logistics, the "how to's", but feels the event has more impact if it comes from the Town.

Robin Mayer said this is a business community request. The Town carries different weight and it could be interpreted as a mandate. She would prefer, and thinks it is better, if it comes from the Chamber. **Sue** responded saying the Town needs enough information to make informed decisions. Many do not respond to Chamber emails. How do we overcome that? If the Town seriously considers this, what does the Town need? Ultimately, she doesn't want to miss anyone. **Matt Lutkus** said he was happy to work with businesses. He could share the mailing list he has. "When you talk about Town staff, you are talking ME." He will work with Sue to get the word out. **Sue** stated she needed a way to do the leg work so no one is left out. **Robin** suggested a compromise whereby Matt would send an introductory email saying to each business that it would be hearing from Sue or Lisa about particulars. This way the Town has sanctioned the Chamber's efforts, but the Chamber is in charge of the details. **Daryl Fraser** said he felt it was extremely important for local government to step up; after all, they are asking to help promote the Town. **Robin** recapped that Sue and Lisa would work with Matt to develop a comprehensive list of who the introductory letter should go to.

Matt Lutkus agreed that the Town's role is such that he is happy to work with all businesses. He will forward an email to them as an introduction. **Sue** asked "What's the best way to do this? Data needs to be collected before the June 3rd meeting. **Matt** said the Chamber covers all District C1; businesses in C2 not really an issue. The Village is the prime site. **Sue** suggested C2 could be included by having a map of what's happening and where, so those outside the Village can participate. **Adam Reny** spoke next stating he was concerned about the timing. An 8 am to 8 pm time might be too dragged out and too long. Specific hours would be more beneficial. Common hours for all businesses would be a plus and would reduce the time parking was tied up. He also felt there needed to be some thought about who controls the parking spots. Are you planning on restricting all parking spots or just the ones in front of individual businesses?

As an aside, he mentioned that across from Wiscasset Ford where the old True Value is, there are as many as 50 out-of-state vehicles parked there. People are parking their vehicles and renting one with

Maine plates so as not to be identified as a person who should be quarantined. He feels this is an indication that summer traffic will come; we're not a dead town.

Robin again thanked Lisa and Sue for coming. Anyone who wishes to have input should contact one of them. Meanwhile they will put together a plan of action for the June 3rd meeting which the Board of Selectmen will act on. As far as porta-potties, Robin will check with Rockland and see what they do. She reiterated that the Board/Town will work with you as much as possible. Anyone can e-mail Matt or Robin with input if they can't reach Lisa or Sue.

Matt commented that there was quite a big agenda to still cover. Because of this, he wants to move **Item VII-1** up in the agenda. The Vine Street/Church Street drainage project needs a public hearing; so Matt wishes to table this item until June 17th when the engineers and public can have input.

On motion (Abbotoni/Fraser) to table Item VII-1 until a public hearing on June 17th. Vote: 5-0-0

Robin commented that by June 17th the Board would be back in its normal meeting space.

VI. Town Manager's Items

1. Review of Covid-19 Related Matters

- a. Governor's Order – The Governor's orders related to rural cites specified social distancing and other guidelines.
- b. Town offices have been open since Monday with guidelines in place.

2. Waterfront Improvement Project Update

Restroom and sanitary sewer RFP's will be ready in the next couple of weeks. The Waterfront Improvement Committee is meeting tomorrow (5/21/20) and a storm drainage RFP will come out of that meeting.

3. Bristol Road Sidewalk Project - Project is moving along. The ground testing issues should resolved soon.

4. LED Street Light Conversion/Municipal Ownership Update

Matt has had a couple of meetings with Newcastle and Bristol. He will have the participation agreement with Real Term ready for the next meeting. Citizens need to be familiar with their lighting system. It will be much better to dark skies. There is a scheduled meeting with Real Term to discuss options for fixtures, etc.

5. Heater Road Resurfacing

Crooker Construction asked about recycled materials from Hannaford parking lot. We did not respond in a timely fashion and material was given to Hanley's Construction. They will provide the material for free and Hanley will lay it on Heater Road for a cost of about \$7700. There has been an easement to improve the road to 32' in width. There is a Warrant Article to approve Heater Road as a Town road. This would cover from the intersection of Biscay Road and Hutchins Lane.

6. Discussion of Date for Town Fireworks

The fireworks company is completely flexible. Options are: still on July 4th or, push it back to later in summer or early fall. It is the State's Bicentennial so it'll be a special display and we can expect a bigger crowd. Decision needs to be made at the June 3rd meeting.

VII. Official Action Items

1. Bid Administrative Services/Construction Management Contract-Vine Street

Item was tabled earlier in the session

2. Contract with George Parker for EDA Grant-related Services

On motion (Mayer/Abbotoni) to approve a contract with George Parker for technical services related to the administration of the Town Economic Development Administration Waterfront Improvement Grant.

Vote: 5-0-0

3. Foreclosure Dates

Presently the foreclosure date is June 1st. These are properties the Town has already taken ownership of. The law states that after 3 years of nonpayment of taxes, the Town may foreclose. The Town in turn will sell the property back to the owners for payment in full of back taxes. **Cheryl Pinkham** is proposing that the Town extend the deadline to August 31st and then sell. **Mark Hagar** endorsed the idea.

On motion (Hagar/Abbotoni) to extend the deadline for foreclosure to August 31, 2020. Vote: 5-0-0

Dick McLean commented that we have to sell these properties to say "acquisition complete".

4. Warrant for Secondary Schools – Town Meeting

On motion (Mayer/Abbotoni) to place Secondary and Adult Education on the Warrant for June 17th.

Vote: 5-0-0

IX. Selectmen's Discussion Items

Daryl Fraser— It is good to see some businesses open.

Lou Abbotoni— informed Chairperson he got cut off from Zoom after the Warrants and only got back in near the end of the Citizen's Comments

Mark Hagar – asked Matt what the possibility was of recouping any money spent as a result of the pandemic. **Matt** said to date the Town has not spent any additional money as a result of the pandemic. He does expect some money from the State as stimulus. However there may be a reduction in revenue sharing. **Mark** suggested that moving voting locations and moving employees around must have incurred some costs. **Matt** said at this point there have been no expenses above what we would normally have. **Mark** said that as a service center we should tap into whatever federal funds we can. **Robin Mayer** - stated that she hoped the service center organization supports this, and as a service center, we would be at the front of the line for assistance as needed.

X. Adjournment

On motion (Abbotoni/Pinkham) to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Vote: 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda L. Letteney

Recording Secretary (via Zoom)

We, the undersigned, do hereby approve as written, or with corrections as noted, the minutes of the above-designated Board of Selectmen meeting (May 20, 2020).

Roberta Mayer, Chairperson

Louis Abbotoni

Daryl Fraser

Mark Hagar

Joshua Pinkham

Town of Damariscotta, Board of Selectmen, signed this date: _____

*Approved unanimously via Zoom
B.O.S. meeting ~~5/20~~ 6/3/2020
[Signature]*