Minutes of Meeting

November 12, 2015

Board of Selectmen

Town of Long Island

Present: Chair Marie Harmon and Selectmen and John Condon and Joseph Donovan; Brian Dudley Town Administrator.

The meeting was convened at 5:15 PM with a quorum.

(Note: Selectmen reviewed the weekly Town Warrants at Town Hall prior to convening their meeting in the Multi-Purpose Room at the School.)

Katie Norton had a brief discussion with the Board and will re-schedule her meeting to the 11/19/15 meeting.

- It was Moved (Harmon), Seconded (Donovan) and Voted to approve the minutes of the November 05, 2015 board meeting. (Motion passed 3-0).

Curt Murley reviewed some IT issues with the board. He noted that the Town Hall scanner needs to be tied into the system. The basic scanning package has no cost and the professional system is $20 annually. He will start with the basic system and defer the professional system to a future date, if needed.

Curt discussed adding a computer terminal at the front counter of Town Hall that would access all overlay maps, shore land zoning and flood zone information. It would be incorporated into Google Earth. The estimated cost for this is $150. The new system will be more accurate and up to date. Curt has a spare monitor to use. The Selectmen agreed.

The board then discussed some Google Works issues. It was noted that the conversation string feature can be turned off within Google Settings. There was also a brief discussion on the value of each Selectman having their own e-mail account. (Note: currently all three board members share the same e-mail address selectmen@longislandmaine.org).

Curt noted that the new Community Center has the wiring in place where needed for internet service. He would like to try a Red Zone wireless connection for both Town Hall and the Community Center with the possibility of extending it to the fire station as well.

It is estimated to cost $150 for the antennas required. Curt will put together a formal proposal on the plan.

Brian will copy town policies onto a memory stick for Curt so he can embed them into the town website.

Emily Jacobs introduced the 2015-2016 general assistance ordinance maximums. She noted that the appendices are revised annually by the Maine Municipal Association in cooperation with the Maine Department of Human Services.

There were some minor adjustments in the appendices which she highlighted.

Chair Harmon then opened up a public hearing on the general assistance ordinance. one person noted that there is never any cost for general assistance and wondered if residents knew of its existence. Someone pointed out that the Rising Tides program sometimes offsets the need for general assistance. Someone else pointed out that there are other sources for help such as church congregations and neighbors.

With no further comments, the public hearing ended.

- It was Moved (Harmon), Seconded (Condon) and Voted to adopt the 2015-2016 Maine Municipal Association General Assistance Appendices to the Town's general assistance ordinance. (Motion passed 3-0).

Selectman Condon then briefed the public on the status and project costs of the new Community Center. A certificate of occupancy is expected in May of 2016. There are some outstanding items in the construction process such as the painting of the facility; the type of flooring; and some Americans with Disability Act (ADA) issues such as an access ramp.

Selectman Condon also noted the changes in the kitchen which was expanded from its original design by utilizing some of the space of an adjoining mechanical room. Finally, because of some design changes, the installed trusses will need additional bracing.

Currently there is between $20,000 and $29,000 left in the budget after expected billings from Benchmark, the general contractor. In addition, Joe Oldfield has raised another $35,000 and there is some $20,000 of in-kind donations.

Selectman Condon concluded by saying that the building looks very nice and the community will be proud of it. The facility is now insured by the Town, including flood insurance for an additional $102 a year.

Someone inquired as to what type of heating system would be in the new Community Center. Ralph Sweet said it is a gas-fired forced hot air system. Another inquiry was how the project was financed. There is a $425,000 municipal bond and the balance being privately raised through donations.

Chairman Harmon then introduced the next agenda item which was a continued public discussion on the appointment of a Road Commissioner. She indicated that she would not be participating in the process based upon a potential conflict of interest pointed out by legal counsel. Selectman Condon distributed copies of an e-mail from a lawyer addressing this conflict of interest and the need for recusal. She noted that she did not want the Town to become involved in any potential litigation because of her participation.

A question was asked about the e-mail from the lawyer Christian Chandler and who he was. John Norton stated that he was an attorney from the Curtis Thaxter law firm and that he had hired him to review process and recusal issues surrounding the recent Road Commissioner appointment.

Another speaker noted his respect for the decision of Chair Harmon to recuse herself from any further participation. Several speakers noted that on a small island, there are bound to be conflicts of interest. Someone noted the unfairness associated with the original termination of the former Road Commissioner and Fire Chief.

Another speaker noted that with Chairman Harmon no longer participating, that the Road Commissioner vote could be tied at 1-1. Another speaker asked how two town hall employees had access to confidential information not available to the general public.

After continued comment about the Town Treasurer and Town Clerk's information sources, Selectman Condon noted the need to focus the public discussion on the Road Commissioner appointment decision of August the 27th.

When asked why the board voted as it did, Selectman Donovan stated that he did not support the August 27th Road Commissioner appointment and Selectman Condon stated that he felt the candidate should be given another opportunity.

Selectman Donovan further pointed out that the issue is divisive and time-consuming and that the Town needs a cooling off period. A compromise is needed and perhaps that could include putting the appointed Road Commissioner on a contractual, as needed, basis.

The board invited suggestions as to how to proceed from here. It was suggested that the entire issue be set aside for a period of time and re-visited at a future date.

The public discussion continued until the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for November 19, 2015.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brian L. Dudley