

League of Towns

A Collaborative Unit of Government Serving
Bar Harbor, Cranberry Isles, Ellsworth, Lamoine, Mount Desert,
Southwest Harbor, Swans Island, Tremont, Trenton, and
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 248 Northeast Harbor, Maine 04662

Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2019
Southwest Harbor Town Office
10:00 a.m.

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00am, Present: Durlin Lunt, Stu Marckoon, Fred Ehrlenbach, Mike Madell, Cornell Knight, Christopher Saunders, Jim Fortune, Justin vanDongen, members of the press and public.
 - II. **Adoption of Agenda.** Moved and seconded to adopt as presented. Vote: Unanimous.
 - III. **Approval of Minutes**
April 23, 2019. Moved Marckoon, seconded Ehrlenbach. Vote: Unanimous
- Regular Meeting**
- IV. **Treasurer's Report:** Review of the financial statements and possible adoption of a Motion "to accept the financial statements as sent". Moved Ehrlenbach, seconded Fortune, vote: unanimous.
 - V. **Old Business:**
 - VI. **Regular Business:-**
 - a. **County Government (Charter)** (Standing item from elected official's workshop 2018) Standing invitation to the County Commissioners to attend LOT meetings to discuss the possibility of a Charter Commission and other relevant matters
Adkins has shared the invitation from the League of Towns with the Commissioners. He will share a formal invitation with all Commissioners. Knight asked whether it would take a charter change to have Commissioners no longer get involved in minutiae. Adkins reports that these agenda items no longer take as much time and so progress is being made. Adkins also reports that he has hired a new tech staffer for the RCC.
 - b. **Affordable Housing.** (Standing item from elected official's workshop 2018)
VanDongen reports that SWH has reduced the minimum dwelling unit size to 250 sq ft. Ehrlenbach asks whether this will have an effect on affordable housing. VanDongen responds that he's not sure, it may only effect vacation

rental housing. The hope is that this will help keep people in town. Lunt reports that the Maine Seacoast Mission building is under construction in Northeast Harbor. This will also include several small affordable apartment units. Marckoon reports no movement since cluster housing amendment passed. Ehrlenbach asks whether anyone is doing anything for weekly vacation rentals. Knight reports that Bar Harbor is planning to add to their ordinance language that allows a unit “or portion thereof” to be rented for a minimum of five days. Lunt observes that there still seems to be lots of activity in Ellsworth.

- c. **Municipal Collaboration** (Standing item from elected official’s workshop 2018) Superintendent Marc Gousse attends to discuss possible ways for schools to collaborate with towns. Possibilities for shared services include technology, HR, and training/professional development (safety). Lunt reports that he would be open to discussions around HR and technology staff. Gousse reports that he is open to piloting a project with a community or two. Gousse reports that since he started, he’s consolidated two collective bargaining agreements into one. He also reports that schools are transitioning to HRAs that several towns have adopted. They’re also looking at a wellness incentive program. Lunt reports that their transition through collective bargaining to HRAs was challenging, but since then, the experience has been very positive. Gousse also describes current activity around an island-wide middle school, possible renovations to Connors-Emerson, and transportation. Also looking at food service efficiencies through coordination, bulk purchasing, etc. Lunt asks whether it would be worth putting pilot projects with schools on agenda of Elected Officials Meeting. Knight says that he might have funding for this, but recommends hiring a consultant to design project. Gousse also wants to undertake an enrollment study, cost estimated at \$7,000-10,000. He wants to know community by community where we are. This would look at census data, available housing stock, and project what school population will be in next ten years. Gousse also described issues with special education funding. It is spiking and dramatically affecting school budgets. Out-of-district placements are particularly costly, and so regional programming that could address those needs could be beneficial. Gousse says that he will discuss with his boards the proposal regarding pilot programs and hiring a consultant. Gousse will set up a meeting with Lunt and Knight regarding pilot programs.

Dispatch update- Madell reports that there is a temporary change affecting radio frequencies. New tower to be installed on Cadillac. VanDongen reports that SWH police chief has discussed dispatch with Bar Harbor/Mount Desert police. Current thought is to have dispatch be handled out of Mount Desert, but everything is preliminary for now. VanDongen reports that their overnight shift would be dispatched by somebody else. SWH BOS wants to keep it on the island.

- d. **Opiates and other addictive substances** (Standing item from elected official’s workshop 2018)

No updates.

- e. **Solarization** (Standing item from elected official's workshop 2018)
Marckoon reports that Lamoine is having an advisory vote on whether to allow Selectmen to lease out landfill to a solar company. Fortune also reports that Cranberry Isles fishermen's coop has put up panels. Town is also looking at putting panels on fire station.

Members Reports - (Other topics of interest and importance to League members)

Future of the Hancock County Planning Commission. Marckoon reports that former employee of HCPC is accused of stealing \$100,000. According to Commissioner Blasi, this organization is effectively defunct. Adkins reports that County could probably handle some of the HCPC functions, such as an e-waste day. Adkins reports that a larger regional organization is a possibility. Ehrlenbach reports that the first key is to have an effective planner. Lunt states that this topic will be on next month's agenda.

f. Future Meetings

June 25, 2019 Lamoine Town Office

July 23, 2019 Cranberry Isles

VII. **Next Agenda:** Suggested discussion items for the next Agenda

VIII. **Adjournment**

Knight moves, Marckoon seconds. Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourns at 11:25am.