

**Town of Mount Desert
SelectBoard Meeting Minutes**
Monday, January 4, 2021
Location: Zoom Meeting

This Meeting was held via remote access.

SelectBoard Members Present:

Chair John Macauley, Matt Hart, Geoff Wood, Wendy Littlefield, Martha Dudman

Public Officials Present:

Town Manager Durlin Lunt, Public Works Director Tony Smith, Town Clerk Claire Woolfolk, Police Chief Jim Willis, Fire Chief Mike Bender, Treasurer Kathy Mahar, Ambulance Service Director Basil Mahaney, Tax Assessor Kyle Avila

Members of the public were also in attendance.

I. Call to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Macauley called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

II. Minutes

None presented

III. Appointments/Recognitions/Resignations

A. Consideration of appointment of Jonathan Sargent to the vacant MEO I position in the Highway Division of the Public Works Department with his effective date of hire being on or before January 29, 2021 at the probationary rate of \$20.46 per hour increasing to \$21.54 per hour after successful completion of the mandatory six-month probationary period.

MOTION: Ms. Littlefield moved, with Mr. Wood seconding, appointment of Jonathan Sargent to the vacant MEO I position in the Highway Division of the Public Works Department with his effective date of hire being on or before January 29, 2021 at the probationary rate of \$20.46 per hour increasing to \$21.54 per hour after successful completion of the mandatory six-month probationary period as presented.

Motion approved 5-0.

IV. Consent Agenda *(These items are considered routine, and therefore, may be passed by the Selectmen in one blanket motion. Board members may remove any item for discussion by requesting such action prior to consideration of that portion of the agenda.)*

A. Thank you note from citizen to Fire Chief Bender

B. Hancock County Commissioners Meeting Minutes from December 5, 2020

It was noted the year was written incorrectly on Item B.

MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Mr. Hart seconding, approval of the Consent Agenda as presented and amended.

Motion approved 5-0.

1 **V. Selectmen's Reports**

2 No Reports were presented.

3
4 **VI. Unfinished Business**

5 *A. Consideration of PW Director Smith's memo to Town Manager Lunt, Jr. dated*
6 *December 30, 2020 related to the Town's current and future Fire, EMS and Police*
7 *needs, including retaining the professional services of Hedefine Engineering's*
8 *professional team to develop a floor plan, elevation view and construction cost*
9 *estimate for space to address these needs at a not-to-exceed cost of \$10,000 to pay for*
10 *these services to be drawn from the Town Office Building Reserve Account No.*
11 *4050100-24570 with a current balance of approximately \$113,468 leaving a balance*
12 *of approximately \$103,468 in the account.*

13 It was noted the year was written incorrectly.

14
15 Public Works Director Smith reported that Police, Fire, and Ambulance are working on
16 the proposal together.

17
18 Fire Chief Bender reported that he is revisiting the possibility of expanding the existing
19 Town Office building. It is hoped that quarters for the firefighters can be created in
20 anticipation of moving at a future date to manning the fire station 24/7, as well as
21 providing space for the Ambulance Service. Police Chief Willis has space needs as well
22 that perhaps can be incorporated into the plans.

23
24 Bender reported that Director Smith is asking for reserve funding to further explore Town
25 Office Building expansion. It will be similar to earlier options reviewed and will likely
26 involve expanding out into the Cranberry Isle parking lot with a two-story addition.
27 Chief Bender hoped to have a presentation ready by the next Board Meeting.

28
29 Police Chief Willis reported that some of the goals he has been tasked with from the
30 Police Chief sharing agreement include:

- 31 - Studying the feasibility of dispatch consolidation between the three MDI Towns
32 providing dispatch services.
33 - Studying the feasibility of centralizing the employment of Bar Harbor and Mount
34 Desert Police personnel.
35 - Conducting strategic planning and consideration of integrating the two Town Police
36 forces into a unified agency.
37 - Studying the feasibility of facility consolidation.

38 Additionally, The Town of Bar Harbor has tasked Chief Willis with improving the
39 effectiveness of delivery of Municipal services, which includes dispatching services, and
40 also studying space and facilities needs.

41
42 With these items in mind, and the possibility that Fire and EMS would expand into the
43 Cranberry Lot, perhaps current Dispatch space and one of the fire bays might become
44 available for Police. The potential extra space might accommodate the following:

- 45 - Centralizing administrative services for Law Enforcement, which is currently
46 working out of different locations.

- 1 - Centralizing Regional Dispatch Services. Chief Willis noted the Town of Southwest
- 2 Harbor has been pursuing the possibility of having their overnight dispatch provided
- 3 by the Towns of Mount Desert and Bar Harbor.
- 4 - Centralizing evidence processing and storage space.

5
6 Chief Willis felt the space created by potential expansion might provide room for all of
7 these things. He noted he has not discussed the ideas with Bar Harbor.

8
9 Director Smith stated the price of an expansion would not be cheap, however, the cost
10 would be spread across three different and necessary services.

11
12 Ambulance Director Mahaney noted Ambulance needs remain unchanged. Their office
13 space is limited, and they have 24/7 staffing needs.

14
15 Ms. Dudman pointed out that five truck bays were planned for. She asked how many
16 bays the Fire Department currently had. Chief Bender noted there were three in
17 Northeast Harbor, one of which is used by Ambulance. Any expansion will hopefully
18 provide adequate room for the next 30 to 40 years, so ample space must be planned for.

19
20 Director Smith added that the Ambulance bay would be taken over for use by the Police
21 in the plans as they now stand. The other two current bays would be retrofitted to house
22 office space and housing for Fire.

23
24 Chief Bender mentioned the tanker truck is currently housed in Somesville. Due to a lack
25 of staffing, there may be times when the Fire Department can't get the tanker from the
26 Somesville station. An extra bay would provide the necessary room to ensure the tanker
27 is available.

28
29 Mr. Wood asked if it would be worth getting an estimate for Option 4; housing the Fire
30 Department at the Highway Garage. Despite the downsides to the option, it may still be
31 worth considering.

32
33 Director Smith noted there were not a lot of positives to the option. Negatives to the site
34 include inclines into Town, the burden on the well and septic system, the heavy summer
35 traffic on Route 198, and at some point, the Town will be required to build a salt/sand
36 shed. One positive was that the Town already owns the land.

37
38 Mr. Wood noted the location is more centrally located to the entirety of the Town and to
39 the island. For the money being spent it might be worth some sketches of the area.

40
41 Chief Bender felt that moving the Fire Station to the Town Garage would affect those on-
42 call firefighters living near the Northeast Harbor Station. Chief Bender speculated they
43 may be unwilling to follow the fire station to a location out of town.

44
45 Ms. Dudman believed the trend of losing on-call firefighters was already under way.
46

1 Mr. Wood understood there were a lot of moving parts to the project, but with the Police
2 Department now a part of the project, and the possibility of Southwest Harbor having
3 needs, he felt it was worth exploring all options.
4

5 Ms. Dudman asked Chief Willis whether Bar Harbor would be willing to assist with the
6 cost if Police administration office space was being built to accommodate both Towns.
7 Chief Willis did not know. The Bar Harbor Town Manager was aware of the discussions
8 ongoing in Mount Desert, but the idea had not been discussed.
9

10 MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Mr. Hart seconding, approving and directing
11 Public Works Director Smith to retain the professional services of Hedefine
12 Engineering's professional team to develop a floor plan, elevation view and construction
13 cost estimate for space at the Town Office, and also to draw up construction estimates for
14 building the full facility at the Highway Garage, to address the needs stated in the memo
15 to Town Manager Lunt, Jr. dated December 30, 2020 related to the Town's current and
16 future Fire, EMS and Police needs, at a not-to-exceed cost of \$10,000 with payment for
17 these services to be drawn from the Town Office Building Reserve Account No.
18 4050100-24570 with a current balance of approximately \$113,468 leaving a balance of
19 approximately \$103,468 in the account.
20 Motion approved 5-0.

21
22 **VII. New Business**

23 *A. Review of FY 2022 Budgets: Public Safety*

24 The Board reviewed the Police Budget.
25

26 Chair Macauley asked about an increase to the part-time seasonal line item. Chief Willis
27 explained it was due to an employee who had been out on medical leave that has now
28 returned and is working part time in a light-duty capacity. This amount covers his pay.
29 Chief Willis suggested perhaps the line item should be renamed, to describe the situation
30 more aptly.
31

32 Ms. Dudman inquired about the Holiday Pay increase. Chief Willis noted Holiday Pay is
33 for Public Safety employees who are required to work through holidays. It involves a
34 cash-out at the end of the year for those missed holidays. The increase is likely due to
35 pay increases.
36

37 Chief Willis pointed out that a new hybrid cruiser would be purchased in the upcoming
38 year. This resulted in an increase in that budget line.
39

40 The Dispatch Budget has remained essentially the same.
41

42 The Board reviewed the Fire Department Budget.
43

44 Chief Bender affirmed there was an additional full-time firefighter added to the budget.
45 Benefit increases in the department are due to the addition of this new employee.
46

1 It was noted that firefighters will likely be required to earn their EMT licensing at some
2 point in the near future.

3
4 Mr. Hart reported he had talked with some EMTs. He felt it might be of interest to the
5 Board to have Ambulance Service members present to the Board where the service
6 stands. Ambulance Director Mahaney voiced his willingness to make such a
7 presentation.

8
9 **VIII. Other Business**

10 *A. Such other business as may be legally conducted*

11 Mr. Hart inquired about an email sent by Warrant Committee Chair Phil Lichtenstein
12 regarding splitting the Third-Party Requests into two meetings. Due to the space
13 constraints caused by a large Zoom meeting, it might make sense to split the requests into
14 two meetings.

15
16 Chair Macauley had no problem with such a thing as long as it can fit within the schedule.

17
18 Discussion ensued regarding how to schedule the two meetings. Clerk Woolfolk noted
19 letters to the Third-party groups needed to be sent this week.

20
21 It was decided to hear the Third-party requests on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, and the
22 following Monday, February 22, 2021.

23
24 **IX. Treasurer's Warrants**

25 *A. Approve & Sign Treasurer's Warrant AP2137 in the amount of \$417,059.56*

26 MOTION: Ms. Littlefield moved, with Mr. Hart seconding, approval and signature of
27 Treasurer's Warrant AP2137 in the amount of \$417,059.56, as presented.

28 VOTE:

29 Wendy Littlefield: Aye

30 Matt Hart: Aye

31 Martha Dudman: Aye

32 Geoff Wood: Aye

33 Chair John Macauley: Aye

34 Motion approved 5-0.

35
36 *B. Approve Signed Treasurer's Payroll, State Fees, & PR Benefit Warrants AP2135,*
37 *AP2136, and PR2114 in the amounts of \$5,142.10, \$1,643.39, and \$105,716.72,*
38 *respectively*

39 MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Mr. Hart seconding, approval of signed
40 Treasurer's Payroll, State Fees, & PR Benefit Warrants AP2135, AP2136, and PR2114 in
41 the amounts of \$5,142.10, \$1,643.39, and \$105,716.72, respectively, as presented.

42 VOTE:

43 Martha Dudman: Aye

44 Matt Hart: Aye

45 Wendy Littlefield: Abstains

46 Geoff Wood: Aye

1 Chair John Macauley: Aye
2 Motion approved 4-0-1 (Littlefield in Abstention).

3
4 C. Acknowledge Treasurer's School Board AP/Payroll Warrants 07 and 14 in the
5 amounts of \$200,000.26 and \$81,861.15, respectively

6 MOTION: Mr. Wood moved, with Mr. Hart seconding, acknowledgement of Treasurer's
7 School Board AP/Payroll Warrants 07 and 14 in the amounts of \$200,000.26 and
8 \$81,861.15, respectively, as presented.

9 VOTE:
10 Geoff Wood: Aye
11 Matt Hart: Aye
12 Martha Dudman: Aye
13 Wendy Littlefield: Aye
14 Chair John Macauley: Aye
15 Motion approved 5-0.

16
17 X. Adjournment
18 MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Ms. Littlefield seconding, to adjourn.
19 Motion approved 5-0.

20
21 The Meeting adjourned at 7:16PM.

22
23
24 Respectfully Submitted,

25 
26
27 Wendy Littlefield
28