

Lili Pew
President
Maggie Hays
Vice President
Averel Wilson
Treasurer & Secretary
John Boynton
Nominating



Matthew Baird
Larry Goldfarb
Sidney Graves
Will Hudson
Howard Lapsley
Gary Madeira
Ned Nalle
Chris Reece
Bill Roberts
Kent Schmidt

MISSION

The Mission of the SRA/TMD is to provide an effective means of communication between the summer residents and the Town Leadership on issues that concern the current and future well-being of the Town. The Board of Directors of the Corporation seeks to represent the views of the summer residents and to keep them informed of, and involved in, the Town planning process on current and future issues.

The SRA/TMD seeks to be the timely and constructive voice of the summer residents with the Town government, working closely with the Town leaders to preserve and protect the unique character, culture, environment, and quality of life of the town, through both a voice and financial contributions to further the mission of the Summer Residents Association.

Annual Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2018
Neighborhood House, Northeast Harbor

I. SRA Welcome: Lili Pew, President

Lili welcomed all and proceeded to read the SRA Mission Statement.

Board members present: Averel Wilson, Matthew Baird, Maggie Hays, Bill Roberts, and Ned Nalle

II. Nomination/Election of Officers and Board Members: John Boynton, Nominating
John was unable to attend and Averel Wilson was asked to make the nominations.

It was moved and seconded to nominate Maggie Hays and Chris Reece to the Board for their second-year terms (2018-2021). The vote was unanimous.

It was moved and seconded to nominate the following slate of officers: Lili Pew, President; Maggie Hays, Vice President; and Gary Madeira, Treasurer and Secretary. The vote was unanimous.

III. Treasurer's and Membership Report: Averel Wilson, Treasurer & Secretary

Membership is down to 245 from a high of 345 in 2014. The Board will be ramping up efforts to encourage membership. Current dues and donations total \$10,770 with about \$100,000 total in checking and Vanguard funds. The Association is poised to look for other financial projects within its Mission guidelines.

Lili took a moment to honor her Dad, whose birthday it is, stating he has encouraged her and set a fine example with his great leadership.

IV. Mount Desert 365: Kathy Miller, Executive Director

Kathy explained that MD 365 is a new non-profit started last year. Its Mission is to promote affordable year-round housing and to revitalize the economic life of the Town. They are currently working on property development and programming (for local businesses).

Property development projects include Fire House Lane which will be a three-story building housing the Seacoast Mission, MD 365 offices, and offices for other businesses, along with three apartments on the 3rd floor. They will also be developing 147 and 149 Main Street, Northeast Harbor. And they have recently contracted with Greg Scott of RLPS Architects for a project on Summit Rd to be developed as residential housing.

A Business Boot Camp held in March 2018 and led by Jay Friedlander was one of the first programming events. Ten local businesses participated. The event was well attended and supported by town people. They are running monthly workshops on business techniques for local businesses and feature a local business each month on their Facebook page. An informative and entertaining video presentation of the Business Boot Camp completed the presentation.

V. Island Housing Trust: Alison Bean, Executive Director

Alison started by describing the Jones Marsh co-project with Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Each entity will have 30 acres at the head of the Island. IHT plans on 9 – 11 house lots; and has started the process with the Bar Harbor Planning Board. Another project is the Sylvan Rd House in Northeast Harbor. It was completely renovated and they are in the process of selecting a family. Although renovation wasn't IHT's primary focus, many applicants can't afford to purchase and renovate homes. They work with sellers and IHT fills in the gap needed to make a transaction happen anywhere on Mount Desert Island.

Alison introduced Kyle Avila whose family was a recipient of IHT's assistance. Kyle, the tax assessor for Mount Desert, described his very positive experience with IHT in buying a house in Northeast Harbor. Until IHT's assistance, he and his family spent their time in rentals six months in each of two places. Being a single income family, it was impossible to buy. When a house became available in Northeast Harbor, he went to IHT and they came up with a plan to assist with the down payment. All are happy with the outcome.

Question: *What happens expense-wise after the purchase, specifically with taxes, which can be high.* Kyle explained that with the excellent tax base in Mount Desert and his valuation, it's affordable.

VI. Acadia National Park Updates: Rebecca Cole-Will, Chief of Resource Management
With a charming slide-show, Rebecca gave a pictorial of “A day in the life of Acadia National Park”. From a Cadillac sunrise to sunset, we were shown Park Rangers at work protecting and preserving the natural resources, such as peregrine falcons; cutting and maintaining firebreaks (half their very experienced fire-team is currently out west fighting wildfires); planning deferred maintenance; fixing infrastructure, such as buildings and roads; counting traffic for analysis; building trails (150 miles in ANP); doing research and collection of ticks for analysis; research on the decline of native bats; biologists studying beavers and collecting water samples for analysis; and assisting visitors with hiking, climbing, biking; the Artist in Residence program; educational programs for children including Junior Rangers; teaching through botany walks and the photography program; birdwatching; Carroll Homestead which takes you back in time; and Drift the canine Park Ranger who promotes having dogs on leashes on the 50 miles of carriage roads. She also praised Friends of Acadia for its excellent support.

Question: *What is the deferred maintenance number?* \$250 million for roads, water plants, sewer systems, etc. Question: *Does Maine DOT maintain park roads?* Not in Acadia National Park; they do use Federal programs. Question: *Is ANP affected by the budget cuts and has it reduced the number of rangers?* Yes, ANP is operating on a budget from 2013 (same amount of dollars). We are trying to be efficient and lean, but it is hard work to maintain. Very lucky with support received. Question: *How are visitor fees used?* Eighty percent stays in ANP for visitor services and deferred maintenance; 20% goes to Washington for small parks that do not collect fees.

Lili described her work as full-time volunteer with Search and Rescue and the difficulties with congested traffic. She encouraged all to review the Transportation Plan that ANP is circulating. And she stressed the importance of a plan to ensure that emergency services can reach people in the park when needed.

VII. Local Housing Proposal: Mike Peabody

Comparing the thriving community from more than twenty years ago – there were 4 grocery stores, a barber, a drycleaner and a pharmacy, along with several retail stores – to today, the decline has the winter population down to 360 from 1000 and only a few businesses have survived. Even with IHT and MD 365, they are not enough to invigorate the community.

His idea is to build a cabin colony for families to go to for the summer months; he likened it to a similar concept when children went to camp. The cabins could cost \$50,000, but would be rented, thereby producing income. He has proposed to Town Manager Durlin Lunt that a study be done to see if summer people are willing to rent their houses from September to June, and to see if year-round people would be willing to rent those houses. He is in hopes that IHT and MD365 will join the effort.

VIII. Sea Lights, Katie Bell

Katie said she is a member of a committee that will be contacting shorefront homeowners and asking that they place a Christmas tree on their property (visible from the water) to be lit from dusk to dawn December 10 to January 10.

IX. Town of Mount Desert Reports

A. Durlin Lunt, Town Manager

Durlin announced this is his 9th year speaking to the SRA as Town Manager, and last winter he had the honor of being the oldest living active member of Maine's Town Manager Association.

In keeping with the theme of current economic climate, he decided to report on the impact to municipal government as it relates to employees. Demographic statistics show that only 39 full time employees of the Town of Mount Desert (TMD) live in town, with a total of 51 living on Mount Desert Island. Trenton and Lamoine share another 12; and 37 % come from Ellsworth and beyond. This is compared to nearly 100 percent that used to live in Town. This is part of the consequence as people move out and sell their homes during good economy – it's a double edged sword. Lack of affordable year-round housing makes it harder to attract people to municipal jobs. The age demographic is also a problem. The average age in Maine is 43, and 44.7 in Town. We do have an aging population. For TMD employees the average age is nearly 56 with 6 years employed. Several employees are rapidly meeting retirement age. Fire and Police average age is 40 and employed 6.8 years. Many can retire after 25 years depending on the retirement plan. Public Works average age is 42 with 6 years of employment and Wastewater is 52 with less than 6 years employment. What can we do? More on-line services, and increase in sharing of services across the Island. With less than 10,000 year-round residents in 4 towns, it makes sense to share services. We need to watch the trends, be creative, and be prepared.

B. Promenade Park, Sam McGee

Sam noted he is a recent addition to the Town's Economic Development Committee, which is a corporate entity mechanism for private donors to contribute to local projects. The Promenade Park design was completed in 2017, using \$30,000 raised by the Committee. The Park, which will be located in the "Graycow" parking lot, will tie into the marina and Main St., cementing the connections. The design will include a pleasing shelter similar to Asticou Terraces. He thanked donors and stated once the final plan is approved, they will fund raise in 2019 for building.

C. Main Street Project, Tony Smith, Director of Public Works

Tony described the Main Street project as one third of a 3 phase plan. The Promenade Park is phase 2. The construction period will start October 15, 2018 and continue until May 24, 2019. Construction crews will wrap up for the summer. Then construction will start again in October 2019 with the plan to finish in December 2019.

Question: *What efforts are being made to get the word out.* Great efforts are being made.
Question: *What is the status of the petition process?* There will be a Special Town Meeting Sept 10, 2018 at the Mount Desert Elementary School. Question: *Can fire fighting effectively be done from Tracy Road?* That is a question for the Fire Chief. Question: *Wouldn't running wires behind buildings on Tracy Rd be costly to building owners?* Answer: Tracy Rd is phase 3 of project and moving wires to Tracy Rd now would not be beneficial to Phase 3. Question: *Is the Warrant [for the Special Town Meeting] voting up or down the [Main Street] project?* The Petition is on the Warrant as an article. Durlin explained the article is procedural. There are some problems with petition which asks to delay the project to a time uncertain, which would effectively negate the project (that was approved at Annual Town meeting May 2018). If the wires are not put underground, that is going against the premise of the project as approved. Question: *Will there be a new sidewalk in front of the Main Street gas station?* The sidewalk in place on that side of the road will be extended. The portion in front of the gas station will be flush with the road, but delineated. Question: *If Main St is torn up in the winter how will businesses survive?* Main Street will have, at times be one-way traffic; however, the road will not be closed. We must maintain accessibility to emergency services.

Lili thanked all for coming and shared one other thought as a community member. She calls it Project Gift Card and likens it to the local CSA's (pre-pay for fresh produce, etc.). We as community members could do something similar with local businesses by putting money on account for the off-season months, and purchasing gift cards from local businesses as Christmas gifts.

Respectfully submitted,

Joelle D. Nolan
Recording Secretary