

Submitted By:
JMY

TOWN OF PHIPPSBURG
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MINUTES
February 16, 2005

Approved By:

Called to order at 6:01 p.m. with Selectmen Rice and Douglass present.

1. Review and Sign:

- Accounts payable, payroll warrants and minutes
Items reviewed and signed.
- Abatements

Abatements for the Lee Family: (1) Map 023, Lot 029-01 was approved for a value reduction of \$21,600 resulting in a final assessed value of \$276,700. Taxes abated were \$198.72. (2) Map 023, Lot 029-02 was approved for a value reduction of \$29,400 resulting in a final assessed value of \$288,100. Total taxes abated were \$270.48. These abatements were granted due to the amount of bog area on the two properties.

2. Meetings and Hearings:

- None

3. Discuss the following issues:

- Request from Brian Gilliam to obtain a piece of granite from the Sand/Salt Shed for a mooring block.

The T/A reported that the Road Commissioner may be using the stored granite on projects scheduled for Stoneybrook Road and Cranberry Point Road, as was done with the Center Pond Causeway rebuild. Also, it would be setting a precedence for future requests. Selectman Rice mentioned that the granite has a value and the Town actually had to purchase some for the steps at the Center Pond causeway. The Selectmen declined the request.

- Request from John Bradford to obtain either a white pine or spruce from the Totman Preserve as per the conservation easement.

During the meeting on February 2, 2005 the Selectman had given Mr. Bradford permission to remove a spruce tree as per the Totman Preserve conservation easement. The tree would be used as a mast for the ship "Virginia." Mr. Bradford has currently requested that he be allowed to remove either a spruce or a white pine. Bob Cummings, President of the Phippsburg land Trust, and Doug Alexander, Chair of the Town Lands Management Committee, had no issues with the change in tree type. Selectmen Rice was concerned that the road to the preserve could be damaged from trucks driving on it when thawed. The Selectmen voted (2-0) to allow the request and the T/A will pass on Selectman Rice's road concerns to Mr. Bradford.

- A date for the Selectmen's Budget Workshop (March 10th).
Selectmen agreed to meet at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 10th at Town hall.

- The Bodwell Grange appraisal and future plans.

The T/A explained that the Grange was appraised was for \$120,000, which both he and the Assessing Agent felt was too high. He also added that expected renovation and repair costs for the building would be approximately \$100,000. He further stated that he had contacted the abutting land owner to inquire if the Town could purchase a small piece of his property to allow the installation of a conventional septic system. The current property owner stated that he is currently selling his property, but he felt that the new owner may be willing negotiate with the Town.

Doug Alexander asked what the building would be used for and who had requested the purchase. It was explained that the building would be used as a community and recreation center. He was also informed that the request had been brought forth by the Recreation Commission and Historic Preservation Commission.

Selectman Rice reminded everyone that the final purchase decision would be made by the voters at Town Meeting.

The T/A explained that he needed to know what sale price the Selectmen would like to him to negotiate for. The Selectmen voted to table any decision until the next meeting after they review the appraisal.

- Town Report format.

The T/A explained that the GASB 34 "Financial Management and Analysis" report he was drafting for the annual audit would be adding 20 to 30 pages to the Town Report. He recommended that the section of the Treasurer's Report listing individual vendor payments be removed to make up for the additional pages, especially since only the municipal expenditures are listed and not the schools. The issue was tabled until the next meeting when Selectman Wells will be present.

- Letter of support for the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. The Trust is working with the State Dept. of Conservation to purchase the Fox Islands so that they become part of Popham State Park.
- Chris Fichtel, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and Bob Cummings, President of the Phippsburg Land Trust, were present to discuss the purchase. The property owner has put the Fox Islands on the market and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust is applying for a grant to help fund the purchase and is asking the Town for support. The purchase would occur this summer and the islands would become part of the Popham State Park. No funding from the Town is required. Selectman Rice asked what the taxes on the islands were and the T/A stated \$237.00 annually. Selectmen voted (2-0) to sign a letter of support provided by Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

- Proposal from Pine Tree Engineering for additional engineering services on Stoneybrook Road (phased quantities/costs and borings).

The T/A explained the proposal which was reviewed by the Selectman. It consisted of an addition \$1,700 to break the project down into five sections and estimate quantities and cost. It also included \$4,600 for sample borings in the swamp, which need to be done while it is still frozen. Selectman Rice stated that the project is ongoing and we need to follow it through. Selectmen voted (2-0) to approve the additional engineering costs \$6,300.

4. Review the following items:

- Ambulance coverage figures

Sue Jones, Rescue Chief, had prepared an estimate on the cost of reimbursing personnel for being on standby and attending calls. The figures were reviewed with no action taken.

5. Discuss attendance at the following meetings, courses, and seminars:

- GA Basics Workshop
- Seminar on Personnel Practices

No one will attend.

6. Miscellaneous

- **The T/A briefed the Selectman on a request from the County for valuation figures so they could compute the Growth Factor for Phippsburg (the Growth Factor is used to determine the Tax Cap as per LD-1.) The Assessing Agent has recommended that the Town wait until she has attended a meeting with the State Department of Revenue Services and MMA the first week in March. Phippsburg is in a unique situation because the FY 2005 interim valuation was implemented which will skew the growth factor (it is a mixture of growth and increased values.) The Selectmen concurred that the figures should be provided after the meeting. Selectman Rice also stated that he will mention it at his County Communications Center Board of Directors meeting on Thursday night at 5:30 p.m.**

- **Josh Bate announced that this would be his last night video taping for "Burgwatch." The CATV Committee will take over taping next week. Selectman Rice stated for the record that even though the municipality is going to tape the meetings, it does not prohibit someone else from doing it also. Selectmen Rice thanked Mr. Bate for his service in the past.**

- **Josh Bate asked when the Selectmen's minutes on the Town's website would be updated. The T/A explained that they were as current as possible. He further explained that the minutes cannot be posted until they are reviewed and signed by at least two of the Selectman who attended the specific meeting. The minutes from the last three meetings still need one more signature.**

- **Selectman Rice mentioned the costs of snow removal in all the municipalities this year. He also stated that we need to keep a watch on LD1 and what it means to the Town. Due to the Tax Cap the Town could only raise the mil rate by 33 or 34 cents which could cause us to delay safety improvements to roads etc. The T/A mentioned that it would take a written vote at Town Meeting to exceed the Tax Cap. Mr. Bate stated that the Selectmen should have banked the \$200,000 that the Town made on selling property last year. The T/A reported that only \$30,000 of the extra funds was from selling property back to the prior owner, most of the rest was from supplemental billing.**

Adjourned at 6:36 p.m.