

Submitted by:

TOWN OF PHIPPSBURG
SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Approved by Selectmen:

John M. Young
Administrator

MINUTES
August 16, 2006

Meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. with Selectman Perkins and Selectman Pye in attendance. Selectman Douglass was not in attendance so Selectman Perkins chaired the meeting.

I. Review and Sign:

1. Accounts payable and payroll warrants.
2. Minutes from March 1st.
3. ID card for Chief Skroski.

All items reviewed and signed.

II. Meetings and Hearings:

1. Meet with the Road Commissioner, Town Lands Management Committee Representative and Land Trust Representative to discuss repairs to the Totman Preserve Road.

Meeting held. Curtis Doughty, Road Commissioner, gave an overview of the work needed. The Preserve approach from the upper gate to the bottom (500 feet) would need work. It would consist of paving to the bottom of the hill and doing some gravel work. Also, a culvert would need to be installed half way up the hill. He asked where the funding would come from.

Bob Cummings, Land Trust, stated that the Land Trust would donate \$5,000.00 for the project. He further explained that the Preserve is owned by the Town and the Land Trust only has a conservation easement. The Land Trust had offered to raise funds to assist with the loan payments and since there was a balance in the account it was used to build the parking lot and bathrooms.

Doug Alexander, Town Lands Management Committee, stated that the Townspeople had voted to fund \$5,000.00 for the top part of the road. This figure was decided on at a certain point and now the prices have gone up.

Bob Cummings stated that the Land Trust had approved the top part of the road and he would have to go back to the board to see if they would want to contribute funding for the lower section.

Selectman Pye questioned the \$53,000.00 listed as dedicated funds on the Land Trust balance sheet and Mr. Cummings replied that the amount was listed prior to the Land Trust paying their annual share of the Preserve Bond and the actual balance is now closer to \$22,000.00. He further explained that the board vote was divided between rebuilding the whole road or just the upper section. The next Land Trust meeting is the 3rd Thursday of September and they will discuss it then.

Mike Young, Town Administrator, stated that the Town would be

having a special Town Meeting within the next several months and it would be possible to have an article on the warrant requesting more funds.

Clifford Newell stated that between the Land Trust and the Town there is \$10,000.00 to work with and the Town should at least start repairs on the upper section. This was reinforced by several others in the audience.

Selectman Pye stated that he had read e-mails from Land Trust members saying that they were unwilling to fund any repairs to the lower section of road. Mr. Cummings replied that the original easement prohibited motor vehicles from going any further than the upper parking lot.

Doug Alexander mentioned that the Land Trust was originally split on amending the Conservation Easement to allow vehicles to the lower parking area, however they eventually voted in favor. Bob Cummings stated that the first vote was unanimous not to approve the amendment and then a later vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of approval.

Selectman Perkins stated that the Totman Preserve is a beautiful facility and we need to know who is on board for repairs to the road. Doug Alexander replied that the Land Trust has always supported the Town Lands Management Committee.

Tom Totman (past Selectman) said that when he was on the Board of Selectmen with Proctor Wells and were discussing the purchase of the property with the Bradfords they had considered a different entrance route for the Preserve. He asked if anyone had considered that or would they in the future. Bob Cummings stated that it would be very important for the Selectmen to attend the next Land Trust meeting.

Selectman Perkins stated that he was hesitant to take this meeting any further until the Land Trust meets and did not want to discuss estimates until there were specifications for the work. Bob Cummings replied that it would be important to have the estimates for the Land Trust meeting.

Selectman Perkins asked Curtis Doughty what his estimate was to which he replied \$8,850.00 for the upper 500 feet (included hot topping the hill, installing a culvert and bringing in gravel for the rest). Selectman Perkins had two other written bids which were provided by Rink Varian and GAC, but one was for completing the lower section and the other was not for the same specifications.

Mike Young stated that at least one estimate had been provided for hot topping a year ago by Gene Reynolds and Doug Alexander also mentioned that he thought a bid had been received at the same time from Mitchell. Mike Young further stated that in order to put the project out to bid it should have specifications and be divided into two projects (upper and lower sections.)

Selectman Perkins stated that there was no way to compare the bids provided and wanted the full board present in two weeks to take any further action. In the meantime he asked the Road Committee and Town Lands Management Committee to provide some basic specifications for the work

to be divided into the upper and lower sections so the projects could be kept separate.

Bill Garth asked what the requirements were to put items out to bid. Mike Young explained that unless State or Federal funding is used for a project and it costs over \$100,000 there is no bid requirement. He also mentioned that there had been a town meeting warrant article in the past to require a bid process but it did not pass, so it is up to the Selectmen what projects are put out to bid on a case by case basis.

2. Meet with the Assessing Agent to discuss a revaluation timeline.

Meeting was held with Juanita Wilson. She said that Selectman Douglass stated at the Seasonal Taxpayers meeting that a property revaluation would probably be completed after the Acre Lot bond was paid off in two years. This was the first time she had heard a time frame. Her recommendation is to do a revaluation as soon as possible.

Selectman Perkins replied that the Selectmen figured a revaluation is due but he didn't think that Selectman Douglass wanted to rush into it. He further stated that the Selectmen really haven't discussed it but they know the assessments are breaking down.

Ms. Wilson stated that it takes about 18 months to complete a revaluation once the contract is awarded and we should start getting proposals soon. Two years ago we did an interim equalization due to a flawed certified ratio and although the certified ratio becomes an issue, it is the fairness and equity to the taxpayer that is most important. She added that the town has lost parity between classes (i.e. waterfront to waterfront) and continues to drift further away from it. She also stated that so far the taxpayers have been very supportive of the Assessing department. Ms. Wilson recommended that the Selectmen start getting together requests for proposals so that they can get an idea of cost and availability of the companies. She had a concern that if TABOR passes many of the large communities will put companies on retainers.

Administrator Young will schedule an assessing workshop for a Wednesday night in September.

III. Unfinished Business

1. Discuss appointments to the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee and Shellfish Commission.

Selectmen voted (2-0) to reduce the number of members on the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee from 7 to 5. The Selectmen voted to appoint Mary Chapin to the committee (2-0). The Selectmen voted (2-0) to appoint Russ Smith to an alternate position on the Shellfish Conservation Commission.

IV. New Business

1. Review Construction Demolition Debris sample report and Monthly Transfer Station Report.

Reviewed. Required sampling of the wood waste revealed a slightly higher quantity of pre-treated wood and plastics than allowed by DEP. Administrator Young mentioned that this was the first test conducted under the new DEP requirements and that the Town would continue to educate the public and the Transfer Station Attendants would increase screening. No further action taken.

2. Review the new County FY2007 Assessment.

Reviewed. The tax assessment for Phippsburg was reduced from \$1,029,898.00 to \$1,012,075.00 because of a greater surplus in the jail budget.

3. Review and sign 3 Liquor Catering Permits for The Robinhood Free Meetinghouse.

Permits reviewed and signed.

V. Correspondence

1. Letter from Mark Overington and Yvonne Cekel concerning the Gensheimer vs. Phippsburg case

Selectman Perkins read a letter from Mark Overington and Yvonne Cekel in support of the Town concerning the Gensheimer vs. Phippsburg case. He added that he was hesitant to appeal the decision because he is trying to save taxpayers' money, however the case is very important to all municipalities and he decided to vote for the appeal.

2. Invitation for Southern Midcoast Maine Chapter Lobster Bake and Cruise
- Reviewed by Selectmen. No further action taken.**

3. 2007 Proposed Program Statement for Community development Block Grant Program.

Selectman Pye will take the information home to review. Administrator Young mentioned that the Town has a problem qualifying for block grants because the Town's average income level is too high.

4. Invitation from Comcast to tour the C-SPAN's Book TV Bus.

Selectman Perkins briefed the public on the C-SPAN bus tour.

5. E-mail concerning Malaga Island Meeting between fishermen and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

Selectman Pye briefed the public on an upcoming meeting between the Maine Coast Heritage Trust and the fishermen that use Malaga Island. The MCHT wants to have a cleanup day on the island.

X. Adjournment - Selectmen voted (2-0) to adjourn at 7:16 p.m.