

Submitted by: TOWN OF PHIPPSBURG Approved by Selectmen:
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
John M. Young MINUTES
Administrator November 29, 2006

Meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. with Selectman Douglass, Chair, Selectman Perkins, and Selectman Pye in attendance.

I. Review and Sign:

1. Accounts payable and payroll warrants.
2. Minutes from October 18, November 1st and November 15th.

All items reviewed and signed with the exception of the minutes for Nov 15th.

II. Meetings and Hearings:

1. Meet with Katrina Van Dusen (MCBDP) concerning the Sagadahoc Regional Rural Resource Initiative (SRRRI).

Ms. Van Dusen explained that she is a consulting planner with Midcoast Council for Business Development and Planning. Three years ago people from the Sagadahoc towns got together to discuss regional concerns and they found that protecting open space was a high priority. They have been meeting loosely since then and are now forming the SRRRI. Bill Emerson had been the Phippsburg Representative, but is no longer with the Conservation Commission. Funding has come from a grant which was matched between the Land Trusts and Conservation Commissions. The objective of SRRRI is to help people learn more about protecting open space and wildlife habitat. She further stated that it would be great to have someone on a Phippsburg committee be involved besides the Land Trust. SRRRI now has a second grant and will be able to work with towns to see where each is at with open space and wildlife habitat. She also added that the organization can make maps available (i.e. habitat maps).

Mary Jo Steiner, Phippsburg Land Trust, stated that it would be a good idea for the Town to participate more by sending a representative. She added that there are also seminars offered which cover habitat, buffers, and shoreland zoning which people can attend.

Chris Fichtel, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, added that this is regional planning initiative and it would be great to have municipal representation.

Selectman Douglass replied that the Town has a Conservation Commission that went stagnant when they appointed a Town Lands Management Committee. Selectman Pye added that the Selectmen were going to disestablish the Conservation Commission at one point in time because of inactivity but the State recommends that such a committee be appointed. He further stated that all the committee positions are currently filled and perhaps they would be willing to take on the responsibility of

Town representation.

Selectman Douglass stated that as a Selectman you can get “committed out.” One reason that the Town does not belong to the MCBDP is because most of the issues they dealt with seemed to concern Bath-Brunswick-Topsham (i.e. affordable housing) and he stopped going to meetings because these three communities dominated everything. Ms. Van Dusen replied that she tries to work with outlying towns. Selectman Douglass added that over 55% of the property in Phippsburg is now tax exempt and undeveloped land is around 60% - some people wonder how much more land we can afford to restrict.

Ms. Steiner stated that the SRRRI is not into restriction planning – just planning better. Selectman Douglass replied that he went to a meeting and someone was mapping out wildlife areas in Topsham and trying to work it backwards. It is good to plan forward not backward.

Selectman Douglass recommended that perhaps someone from the Conservation Commission may be interested in representing the Town and Selectman Pye also recommended that the Land Use Ordinance Committee be asked if they are interested.

Ms. Steiner advised that the next meeting would be tomorrow and Ms. Van Dusen added that the meeting following that would be in January.

Selectman Douglass discussed the recent “Brookings Report” which stated that Maine has a lot of organizations that overlap in a number of areas.

Selectman Pye asked how the SRRRI could assist outlying towns concerning affordable housing. Selectman Douglass added that we have expensive land in town and no water or sewer infrastructure. Ms Van Dusen replied that it would help to take the premium out of land. She continued to explain that the SRRRI actually is divided into two groups – one deals with open space and the other with affordable housing. They would like to make presentations in every town of “where they are at”. She mentioned that Harpswell has started an affordable housing land trust. Ms. Steiner said that the town does not have to reinvent the wheel – some places have already come up with solutions.

Selectman Douglass requested that the Town Administrator ask the Conservation Commission and Land Use Ordinance Committee if they might be interested in having a member represent the Town on the SRRRI. He then discussed the Comprehensive Plan and explained some of the inconsistencies. He further stated that the Town has a plan to correct them.

2. Meet with Chris Fichtel concerning Totman Preserve match for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Grant.

Chris Fichtel, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, explained that his organization had applied for, and received, a million dollar grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2002. In order to apply for this grant MCHT had to have a match of Land Value pledges. In 2002 the Phippsburg Selectmen signed an agreement to use Totman Preserve as part of the match, which

was conditional on a vote at the May 2002 Annual Town Meeting. The agreement required that Totman Preserve always be preserved and if sold or developed it would need to be approved by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He further explained that the property is already restricted by a conservation easement held by the Phippsburg Land Trust so the property is guaranteed to remain restricted anyway. The problem was that a warrant article to allow the match was never on the Town Meeting warrant and this oversight needs to be corrected.

Selectman Douglass asked how many times the property could be used as a match to which Mr. Fichtel replied only once. Selectman Douglass also stated that although it was an agreement with the former Selectmen it must be voted on by the current Selectmen.

Selectmen voted (3-0) to have a warrant article at the May 2007 Town Meeting to rectify this oversight.

III. Unfinished Business

1. Tree Growth Case

Selectman Douglass announced that he along with Juanita Wilson and Selectman Perkins had attended the final hearing by the State Board of Property Tax Review (SBPTR) concerning the Tree Growth appeal for property which was entered into the Tree Growth Program in 1998 by the Darwin L. Gillette III Trust. The appeal was filed by Keybank National Association and Marie Gillette as Trustees. The SBPTR ruled in favor of the Town and stated that the appeal was not filed in a timely manner because the issue stems from 1998 and appeals must be filed within three years. He also felt that there was unanimous consent of the SBPTR that the Tree Growth form did not need signatures of all the Trustees when submitted and there was enough evidence that all the Trustees associated with the property at that time knew the property was going into the Tree Growth program and consented to the program.

2. One Stream Recycling

The Selectmen discussed One Stream Recycling and asked that it be started as soon as possible. The Town Administrator will develop a flyer to be mailed and make other arrangements, such as a press release. The program will allow all recyclables to be co-mingled in one container and also increases the type of material that can be recycled. This will be more convenient for the citizens and will also save money because the containers will shipped completely full rather than just when the end compartments fill up with plastics.

3. Security lights at Transfer Station

The Selectman asked the Town Administrator to have CMP conduct a survey for additional lighting at the Transfer Station. They also discussed the possibility of a security video system.

4. Posted Roads Ordinance

Selectman Douglass requested that the Posted Roads Ordinance be amended prior to the holidays. A workshop had been held in September to

work on the amendments. The Town Administrator will arrange a final public hearing on this issue and get the Road Commissioner's opinion on increasing fines.

IV. New Business

1. Consider the appointment of Roland Bisson to the Board of Appeals (Alt) and Brent Hershey to the Board of Assessment Review.

Selectmen voted (3-0) to approve both appointments. It was added that the Board of Appeals supported the appointment of Roland Bisson.

2. Discuss policy/requirements for acceptance of donations and grants.

The citizens at Town Meeting each year vote to authorize the Selectmen to accept gifts and donations on behalf of the Town to be used for the purpose to which they are given. The Selectmen discussed the authorization and explained that any donations or acceptance of grants (i.e. for Memorial Site, Historic Preservation, Bike Rodeo, Recreation Commission, Town Lands Management, etc) must be approved by the Selectmen. They further explained that this also allows the public to see what is being donated to different groups and recognizes those giving the donations. They also agreed that the situation may be different for the Totman Library (they have an elected Board of Trustees), Cemetery District (they are incorporated and have an elected Board of Trustees) and the Fire and Rescue Department (donations are given to the Fire and Rescue Associations which are private organizations). They also stated that it is important that all equipment purchased through donations or grants be reported so that the items can be added to the Town's fixed asset list and insurance policy.

Selectman Pye recommended that Boards and Committees forward copies of their minutes to the Selectmen.

The Selectmen also requested that Employees, Boards and Committees keep them advised of fundraising activities.

3. Discuss Private Cemetery Restoration account

The Town Administrator, Mike Young, explained that this fund account was established several years ago when the private cemetery restorations were a school student project coordinated by teacher Mary Chapin. Money raised by the students through fundraising and donations were kept in this account to cover expenses for associated supplies and work. The current balance in the account is \$502.55. Currently the school is no longer involved in the restoration projects and the fundraising and work is being done by a group of private individuals who have no association with the Town government. The head of the group is Julie Varian. The Town Administrator recommended that the town no longer maintain the account and the group set up there own bank account and the balance of the funds be given to them to continue the projects.

Marie Varian, representing Julie Varian who could not make the meeting, stated that the project had started out as school education and Merry Chapin had received a grant to assist with the costs. It has been

awhile since then and the bulk of the money comes in from donations and goes towards the projects. Thanks to the VOA workers the group was able to restore four different cemeteries which makes them eligible for another grant from the Maine Old Cemetery Association (M.O.C.A.). This organization has brought tours into the town and the cemetery work has been reported in the local newspaper. M.O.C.A is amazed at what the small group has done. 34 of the 103 cemeteries have been reclaimed and there are some private cemeteries not even on the list. The three large cemeteries in Town are maintained by the Town's Cemetery District. The required time and cost for maintenance of the private cemeteries after restoration is enormous. Ms. Varian thanked Julie Totman (prior Treasurer) and Lisa Wallace (current Treasurer) for assisting with account. Although the Town is not going to fund the restorations the group will continue the projects. They will bring in the current bills in several weeks so that they can be paid, which should empty the account. Ms. Varian further noted that it can be expensive to restore and maintain cemeteries – an example is the cost of stone epoxy which is \$150.00 for a pint which will repair three breaks in a stone. Future donations will go into a different private account and the M.O.C.A. will help the group get organized. She stated that the Town has never given money for the project or been asked to. The group would love to repair the fences along the private cemeteries. She mentioned that a beautiful job was done to the cemetery behind Hidden Mountain Cottages and she further explained the types of repairs that were done and the people that helped. Julie Varian has recognized that the project has evolved and the town really has nothing to do with it now.

Selectman Perkins, who works on the Cemetery District cemeteries, stated that he could not give Julie Varian, Jessie Varian, and Jamie Gilman enough credit for what they have done. He asked how much money the group would need to continue to which Marie Varian replied at least \$1,000.00 for maintenance.

Selectman Douglass asked if the Town Cemetery District would be interested in getting involved and have a loose association with the smaller private cemeteries. This way grants and donations could go through an already established group. Marie Varian replied that the M.O.C.A. is already established to help with old cemetery restoration. Selectman Perkins recommended that the group contact them for some guidance.

Selectman Douglass recommended that the group publish a history of the private cemeteries along with a list of people buried in them as a fundraiser. He also recommended that M.O.C.A be invited to attend a joint meeting with the group, Selectmen and Cemetery District.

Selectman Perkins added that when Jessie Varian first got involved with the private cemeteries she purchased books on how to maintain cemeteries and gave them to Everett for the town cemeteries.

4. Accept \$250.00 donations from Sam Roberts to the Memorial Site, Historic Preservation Commission, and Cemetery District.

Selectman voted (3-0) to accept the donations for the purpose they were

given. Selectman Douglass thanked him for the contributions.

5. Acceptance of a \$49,347.00 grant from the Maine State Library for an expansion of the Totman Library.

Carol Doughty, Chair of the Library Trustees, briefed the Selectmen on the proposed Library expansion for which the grant has been approved (50% cost share). She explained that the Library can only hold 25 people comfortably for events and they had 60 people attend a presentation by George Bowker. Many people want to attend events but are unable to because of space and lack of handicap accessibility to some areas of the Library. She added that a retired architect had drafted the plans and the addition would consist of a separate structure with a covered walkway so that the addition can be free standing – therefore keeping the integrity of the building.

Selectmen voted (3-0) to accept the grant for the purpose to which it is intended.

Selectman Perkins congratulated the Library Trustees on there endeavors to build the addition.

6. Review submerged lands Applications for Wyman, Keyes and Doris Corson Trust.

Selectman had no comments. No further action taken.

7. Assessing Workshop

Selectman decided to conduct an Assessing Workshop on December 13th in lieu of a Selectmen's Meeting.

V. Courses and seminars

1. Maintaining Gravel Roads Workshop by Maine Local Roads Center.

A copy was given to the Road Commissioner and Road Committee.

VI. Adjournment - Selectmen voted (3-0) to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.