



# **OWLS HEAD SELECT BOARD**

## **Minutes**

### **September 20, 2021 @ 4pm**

**Live on YouTube**

#### **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

**4:00 pm** Chair Gordon Page calls the meeting to order. Also, present are Select Persons Linda Post and Thomas Von Malder. Also present were, Dick Carver, Bill Gay, Stuart Rich, Jeannie Klainer, Dr. Paul Klainer, Annette Naegel, Meredith Batley, Michael VonCannon, Kathryn DerMarderosian, Lynn Chaplin, Bill George, Lauren Dillard, Paul Rosen, Maria Devery, John Walker, and recording Secretary, Eleanor Stone.

#### **ASSESSORS MEETING**

Assessors Agent Amy Dunn provides a document showing the exempt properties in town explaining the tax-exempt property measured in dollars, versus the total percentage of town tax-exempt property measured in landmass or acreage. (see attached)

Resident Dick Carver says that based on the documents given, he owns more property than the Knox County Airport. He says that when the Airport was transferred to the City of Rockland, there were 460 acres, 63.2 were given to the Owls Head Transportation Museum. Since 1968, the airport has purchased 246 acres, 26 parcels of land around the airport and in the town, they were sold as rural residential, and that shows different as what is shown on the document, Carver says. Chair Page requests that Assessors Agent Amy Dunn look into that situation.

Page reported that he asked a question to Maine Municipal Association, "Is it legal, or advisable, for town assessors who are also the select board to send friendly letters to tax-exempt property owners requesting payment instead of taxes? More specifically, the requests would be intended for non-profit museums, land trusts, and churches. Because part of the annual tax bills includes payments to the county and the schools, those organizations would not be included." MMA Staff Attorney Michael Lichtenstein responded, "Payments instead of taxes are typically negotiated in a voluntary agreement between a municipality and an institution or organization that owns an otherwise tax-exempt property under 36 M.R.S. § 652. While I do not think that it is improper, I would recommend that the Board work with the town attorney before approaching such an institution or organization to discuss payments, and certainly before attempting to negotiate and review a PILOT agreement with one." Lichtenstein goes on to say that if the Town has certain services that are currently provided through taxation that could instead be charged on a use basis (e.g. sewer and water), the Town might want to consider doing so since you would not need special statutory authority to assess every "resident" (whether tax-exempt or not) on a usage basis.

Page states that it sounds as though it is not advisable to send out a formal letter to the nonprofits that own property in town.

Post says that several years ago, the Transportation Museum gave some funding, and when Maine Coast Heritage Trust bought Ash Island, there was an agreement that a certain amount of money would be given instead of taxes.

**MOTION: Linda makes a motion to abate the taxes in the amount of \$180.05 for the property at Map 10 Lot 002-002, 245 South Shore Dr. Property is owned by Peter Walker. Tom seconds that motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

**MOTION: Linda makes a motion to abate the taxes in the amount of \$80.12 for the property at Map 003 Lot 018, 371 Dublin Rd. Property is owned by Mark, Nancy, and Bradley Nystrom. Tom seconds that motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

**4:18 pm - Chair Gordon Page adjoins as Assessors and opens as Select Board.**

### **APPROVE MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION: 4:19 pm Linda makes a motion to accept the minutes as amended for the meeting held on September 07, 2021. Tom seconds the motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sherry Stanley comes before the board to explain her reason for not wearing a mask. She reads off an e-mail that she sent to the board members earlier in the day.

"I appreciate you taking the time to hear me this afternoon and making special accommodations. I want to give you a written copy of most of my talking points for the record. First, I want to explain how I got to this place. I have served on the Board of Appeals for the Town of Owls Head for several years. A couple of weeks back Susan called me to ask if I would be willing to renew my seat on that board. I said I would be happy to. Then there was a selectmen's meeting to appoint the board members. At that meeting, it was brought to the attention of the Select board that I had been seen at more than one meeting without a face covering so the board decided to postpone my appointment to ask me personally if I would be willing to wear a mask if I were appointed to the board. Rodney Mason, the chair of the BOA called and asked if I would be willing to wear a mask at the meetings. I explained that I would not and that if I didn't it is not in his job description to police mask-wearing anyway. The next day I received a call from selectman Gordon Page who asked me the same questions. I explained that I am claustrophobic and philosophically (religiously) opposed to wearing a mask. We had a great discussion. I truly appreciate his diplomacy and listening skills. I asked since there is no state mandate for mask-wearing, who created this new rule at the town office. He said that the Select Board did. He noted that there would be a huge backlash if the board did not mandate the mask. So it seems that the decision was based on fear rather than science. I would like to point out a few thoughts on this whole self-imposed mask issue.

1. The CDC's website gives contradictory information about the efficacy of masks.
2. The side of the package the masks come in states clearly that they are not intended to reduce or stop the spread of covid.
3. There is insufficient data anywhere to support that mask effectively prevent the spread of covid.
4. It is not the town's job to force people to wear medical devices on their faces.
5. There is much more proof that boosting the immune system with healthy food, adequate water, exercise, sunlight, and close contact with other humans (socializing) all have a greater impact in

lessening your chances of contracting or dying from covid than mask-wearing, but we haven't mandated eating organic food and gym memberships for some reason.

6. Masks give a false sense of security.

7. It has been scientifically proven that face masks cause more physical and psychological damage than good.

8. Are the selectmen willing to allow for philosophical/religious or medical exemptions?

9. Who will enforce these "rules"? Do we want to waste resources enforcing rules that do no good and potentially cause harm?

10. Are each of you willing to take personal responsibility if someone wears a mask to the town office and passes out and hits their head and gets permanent damage from it?

You all have a responsibility to do what is in the best interest of the people of the town of Owls Head. This rule is not in the best interest of anyone, in fact, can cause damage. I am presenting you with an opportunity to be the change this world needs. Be true leaders and stand in the truth. If people feel safe wearing the masks they can. No one will take away their right to wear the mask but do not force me to wear one. Thank you for your time and consideration.”

Chair for the Zoning Board of Appeals, Rodney Mason states that Sherry has been a fantastic board member, having served for many years. Mason says he loves having Sherry on the board.

Dr. Paul Klainer states he is the Medical Director for the Knox County Health Clinic. He states that masks are not perfect, but it is one piece of protection when guiding yourself and others from contracting COVID-19. He believes that wearing masks indoors should be done.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

A concern was brought up at the past Select Board meeting on Sept 07, 2021, regarding Zoning Board of Appeals member Sherry Stanley who refused to wear a mask while attending meetings. So her being reappointed was carried over until further discussion could be done.

Sherry Stanley approached the Select Board with her reason for not wearing a mask, as noted above in the public comments section. Tom Von Malder asks the question “How many meetings are held in a year?” And Stanley replies, “not many, perhaps two.”

**MOTION: 4:35 pm Thomas makes a motion to reappoint Sherry Stanley to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Linda seconds that motion.**

***Vote passes 3-0***

The decision was made that Sherry would attend any meeting via zoom if scheduled at the town office.

Jeannie Klainer, Dr. Paul Klainer, Annette Naegel, and Meredith Batley representing Knox County Health Clinic to discuss the possibility of sending out a letter of support regarding a partnership to expand access to affordable medical, dental, and mental health services for Knox County through the Affordable Cares Act Funds. Their goal is to renovate a wing of the Thomaston Municipal Building to provide quality affordable healthcare services to our community.

**MOTION: 4:55 pm Linda makes a motion to approve sending out a letter of support for the Knox County Health Clinic to move the Thomaston Municipal building. Tom seconds that motion.**

***Vote passes 3-0***

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION: 4:58 pm Tom makes a motion to accept the photo donated by Eric Weisgerber. Linda seconds that motion.**

***Vote passes 3-0***

**MOTION: 5:00 pm Linda makes a motion to approve signing the payroll warrant as presented. Tom seconds that motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

**MOTION: 5:02 pm Tom makes a motion to accept the resignation of Gordon Page from the Transfer Station Board. Linda seconds that motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

#### **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Richard Carver states that resident Steve Cook would like to be nominated for the Harbor Committee. The request will be added to the agenda on October 04, 2021.

#### **APPROVE AND SIGN THE MUNICIPAL WARRANT**

**MOTION: 5:30 pm Linda makes a motion to approve and sign the warrants as presented. Tom seconds the motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**

#### **ADJOURN THE MEETING**

**MOTION: 5:31 pm Linda makes a motion to adjourn. Tom seconds the motion.**

**Vote passes 3-0**