

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**TOWN OF ST. ALBANS**  
**REGULAR SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**MONDAY, April 20, 2020 6:00 p.m.**

Roster: Todd Brown, Vice Chairman  
Peter Denbow  
Hiram Weymouth, Chairman  
Richard Fisher, Town Manager  
Brady Snowman

In attendance: Dennis Smith, Joyce Weymouth Total: 7 persons

**Call to Order**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public Forum**

Chairman Weymouth offered the floor to the general public. There were no public comments.

**New Business**

1. Approve and sign minutes for March 30, 2020 Special Meeting

*Todd Brown motioned to approve the minutes of March 30, 2020. Seconded by Peter Denbow. Vote: 3-0*

2. Correspondence

Manager Fisher provided correspondence from our auditor concerning the COVID-19 virus.

Manager Fisher provided correspondence from a second contractor for the removal of the asbestos at 15 Water Street. Chairman Weymouth asked how many contractors have we contacted. Manger Fisher replied that he had contacted six contractors, five promised quotes, and only two followed through. Manager Fisher was asked where the two contractors were from? Manager Fisher stated Ellsworth. Chairman Weymouth made a motion to continue with Eastern Maine Environmental. Seconded by Todd Brown, 3-0 All in Favor.

Manager Fisher stated he received correspondence from DHS on General Assistance requirements for COVID relief monies, from Governor Mills concerning her response to President Trump, and an invite to attend the next MRC meeting via ZOOM.

The final letter Manager Fisher received was an email from the Town Sexton Travis Stewart concerning a rate increase. The town he received Mr. Stewart's proposal at 4 pm today after an initial email exchange this morning initiated by the Sexton. Manager Fisher has not had sufficient time to evaluate the proposal or make recommendations but wanted the Board to have the proposal in their possession as soon as possible for review.

*Todd Brown motioned to table the proposal until the next meeting. Seconded by Peter Denbow. All in Favor 3-0*

Peter Denbow asked how often is this contract advertised for bid? Manager Fisher replied that the contract is identical every year but the sexton is new. Manger Fisher offered to look into the matter before their next meeting.

Todd Brown began reviewing the contract for the Selectmen. Manager Fisher stated that the result is an increase from \$11,485 to \$15,000 per year. The Board and the Manager broke down the invoice and determined the percentage of increase is 30.6%. The Board agreed that this was a substantial increase and Chairman Weymouth suggested that the Sexton meet with the Selectmen to explain the reasons for his proposed increase.

### 3. Disaster Relief

Manager Fisher asked the Selectmen to approve the application for disaster relief. There was a general discussion on the trees down and the amount of hours used to remove dangerous branches hanging over the roadway. There was a general discussion on the tree branches remaining. According to Peter Denbow most of the trees were on Pond Rd. Manager Fisher requested a motion.

*Todd Brown made a motion to authorize The Town Manager to apply or disaster relief, Seconded by Peter Denbow 3-0 All in Favor.*

### 4. Bridge Inspections

Manager Fisher provided the Selectmen with copies of the bridge inspections. There was a general discussion on the bridges. No action taken.

### 5. Treasurers Report

Manager Fisher stated that the key to the report is the loss of operational revenue due to the office closure due to Covid-19 pandemic. Manager Fisher reviewed the report with the Board and stated that if this continues, we will have a cash flow problem in July.

Manager Fisher reported that revenues have slowed and expenses are consistent with the budget. Manager Fisher will be adding the CD interest into TRIO after consultation with the bookkeeper. The CD's are now included in TRIO, as they were not included in 2019.

Manager Fisher broke down the report by page. The actual costs are at 33% of the budget.

Manager Fisher explained in detail the report, and briefly discussed with the Board the Auditor's suggestion that we stop using spreadsheets and how this presents a temporary problem since it has been a long held conclusion that TRIO does not easily accommodate reports since operational revenue is posted through the revenue account into the General Ledger but real estate tax revenues are posted directly into the General Ledger.

The report is attached to the minutes. Manager Fisher discussed the report. On revenues at the end of the first quarter the general ledger is balanced at \$596,154.36 with another \$250,539.75 in a General Fund CD that will expire in July for a total General Fund balance of \$846,694.11.

In the first 3 months of 2020, the town had revenues of \$286,203 and expenses of \$218,993 for a net gain of \$67,210. However these numbers were offset by our monthly payments to RSU-19 for the first quarter in the amount of \$445,150. This realizes a net loss of \$377,940 for the first quarter of the year. Our operational revenue is \$30,000 less in the first quarter than the same period last year most likely due to Covid-19 and the Governor's Executive Order extending expiration dates on vehicle registration.

Future forecasting of two more RSU payments for May and June of \$299,244.12 against declining operational revenues is to be closely watched. We recommend should financial conditions warrant to freeze all non-essential expenditures after May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Manager Fisher then identified the spreadsheets on CD interest, then the Fund Balances page. He closed by notifying that Chairman Weymouth attended the County budget meeting and Manager Fisher attended the RSU-19 School Board meeting. Manager Fisher stated that the school board is currently proposing a 2% increase. He then ceded the floor to Chairman Weymouth who stated the County is currently proposing a 5.8% increase.

Chairman Weymouth asked Manager Fisher to research what it would take to move from a calendar year budget to a fiscal year budget. Manager Fisher replied that he would have something for the Selectmen at their next meeting.

## **6. Fire Department**

Dennis Smith requested time to deliver a report on the Fire Department and was granted the floor by Chairman Weymouth.

Mr. Smith reported membership is now over 20 members. The Fire Department answered a call structure fire in Hartland last week, and the cascade truck went to Harmony for a structure fire, and went to Canaan for a structure fire there at 3 in the morning. Engine 3 has problems but the mechanic wont come out due to coronavirus. Things are going real well but still have work to do upstairs.

## **7. Advertise for Bids for Materials**

Manager Fisher requested that the Selectmen authorize him to bid out for materials; winter sand, summer stone and fuel.

*Motion by Todd Brown, Seconded by Peter Denbow to authorize the Manager to bid out for materials. All in Favor 3-0.*

## **8. Thomas Harville -April 20<sup>th</sup> Deadline**

Manager Fisher advised the Board that today was the deadline for Mr. Harville to pay his supplemental tax with penalties or the town will tax acquire the property. We won't recommend the Board move forward with recommendations until we are certain the check isn't lost in the mail. We tried calling but the only number we had was no longer in service.

## **Old Business**

### **9. Covid-19 Plan of Action**

The first order of business was the public works department is back full time but Commissioner Snowman proposed 4-10 hour days in the summer. There was a discussion on how that affects holidays.

*Motion by Todd Brown to table the hours discussion until the next meeting, seconded by Peter Denbow. All in Favor 3-0.*

Manager Fisher provided cost information the online service (rapid renewal) that the town has made available to the public. The initial costs are \$ 1,300 the yearly maintenance fee plus \$225.00 per year from TRIO for the module. Manager Fisher's experience with online payments is that once people find it, they use it. The front end is really smooth, but the back end is poorly designed and requires a great deal of additional work.

Manager Fisher discussed office improvements that would make the office safer for the employees and the general public. This would create separation and safety. Manager Fisher explained the office has already modified our interaction with the public through the door.

The staff will be here for normal hours. As far as reimbursement that has yet to be established. The Action Plan expires April 1<sup>st</sup> and next week Manager Fisher will have revisions ready for approval. Manager Fisher will attend free webinars on the taxes.

### **10. Committee Reports**

None

**11. Selectmen Reports**

Chairman Weymouth updated on the Transfer Station's purchase of the loader.

**12. Road Commissioner**

Commissioner Snowman requested the Board provide guidance on materials bidding. He stated he had given up on gravel dust. Todd suggested it be bid out based upon specs that the Commissioner prepares. Peter Denbow suggested the Road Commissioner prepare the specs for the Selectmen to review. Chairman Weymouth agreed with Todd Brown and Peter Denbow and directed Mr. Snowman to prepare something for the competitive bid.

New Truck - Road Commissioner Snowman stated his desire for a single axle truck and reviewed his requirements for this truck and the timelines for getting the truck delivered so we can use it this winter.

Chairman Weymouth stated he would like to delay until we are through the virus. Commissioner Snowman responded that the citizens have approved the money, and the manufacture will require 5-8 months to build the vehicle, and he would like to move forward putting out to bid.

Peter Denbow agreed that a competitive bid would provide the Board with actual financial options for the purchase. A discussion on the specifications of the truck between Commissioner Snowman and various selectmen. The discussion turned to using the stainless body from the GMC on the new truck and selling the GMC.

Peter Denbow confirmed with that the truck bid will not include the plow or sander and will only be a cab and chassis. Road Commissioner Snowman agreed.

Executive Session

*Todd Brown made a motion at 8:00 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to MRSA Section 405 6.A to discuss personnel, seconded by Hiram Weymouth. All in Favor*

*Todd Brown made a motion to end the executive session at 8:32 pm. Seconded by Hiram Weymouth. Todd Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Peter Denbow. All in Favor 3-0.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Fisher  
Manager