

Mason's Island Fire District Meeting
May 11, 2021 – 5:30 PM
Masons Island Yacht Club

Minutes of Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order By Ethan Tower, President, at 5:33 pm. Present for the meeting were Board Members Ethan Tower, William Taylor, Kristin Foster, Scott Parry, Tom Flaherty, John Parry, David Krupp, Lee Hisle, and Tom Cooke. Jean Anderson (Tick-Disease Prevention Program) was present. Tax Collector Liaison Alex Ellison was present until 6:30. Rufus Allyn was absent.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

The agenda was modified to permit Jean Anderson to address the proposed Tick Tax program immediately after the President's Report. The Board also agreed to discuss the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 as part of the Treasurer's Report. There were no other agenda additions, changes, deletions, or changes.

3. Approval/Correction of Previous Minutes

a. Motion to approve the minutes from April 13, 2021.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented by Secretary Tom Cooke without change. The motion was approved

4. President's Report – Ethan Tower

a. Emergency Calls – 3 for April; 31 for the fiscal year.

Ethan reported that there were 3 emergency calls for the month of April, including 2 EMS calls.

6.b. Tick Tax – Jean Anderson/John Parry

Jean Anderson reported on the information session for residents held on May 8, 2021. There were no negative comments. There were questions about including tick boxes and Jean responded that in addition to the greater cost, the provider was not a MIFD vendor.

Discussion ensued concerning the limitation of participants to single family residents. John Parry emphasized the focus on residential properties, noting that any attempt to include easements would add a huge cost. The program would continue to treat pathways through the Nature Preserve, the Skiff Lane launch area, and the Community Garden. After discussion, the Board agreed to continue with the original recommendations to treat single family resident properties.

5. Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor

Bill reviewed the 2020-2021 Profit & Loss report (dated May 6, 2021) noting that it reflected much the same levels as last year. He noted that while the report reflects only \$4,150 in mowing expenses, the Board can expect that the full budget amount of

\$12,000 will be used. There was nothing significant to report in connection with the Balance Sheet. Participation in the current tick tax program is projected to reach the same participation levels as last year, with checks still coming in.

Bill proceeded to review the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. He noted that the current tick tax budget of \$23,000 would be increased to \$35,150 based on the projected cost of treating single family residence properties. The proposed budget includes projected increases in Road Maintenance (increased plowing costs), Fire Protection (Mystic Fire Department increase), Traffic Control and Safety (minimum wage increase impact on Ace Security costs). Funds in the amount of \$6,000 are also included for Pond Maintenance. Increased expenses are projected to exceed revenue increases by only \$1,460.

Bill continued with a review of the proposed Capital Improvements for 2021-2022. Rufus Allyn has informed him that the cost of crack sealing will increase to \$10,000. Bill noted that the budget as presented will need to be modified to increase the Road Improvement Management Fee, which is a percentage of costs, to reflect the new \$10,000 number. The proposed budget includes \$30,000 for a Chippechaug Trail beach erosion engineering study. Kristin Foster noted that the actual cost will be lower if the task force is successful in obtaining grants. Bill stated that the \$30,000 will come out of capital reserves and accordingly will not impact the mil rate. Discussion ensued in connection with the goals of the engineering study, the nature of the grants sought by the task force, the timing of receipt of grant funds if grant applications are improved, and the timeline for engineering study to be completed.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the budget with the change in the Roads Management Fee as discussed above for presentation at the annual meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Pond Committee – Chris Ficke / Martha Ficke

No specific proposal has been received from the Pond Committee for the 2021-2022 budget. Ethan reported that the Pond Committee is studying potential uses for the budget allocated for 2021-2022, including the potential use of carp to control algae in the pond.

b. Tick Tax – Jean Anderson / John Parry

i. Any changes resulting from the informational meeting?

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting as noted above. There were not changes based upon feedback from the informational meeting.

c. Shoreline Protection – Kristin Foster

i. Any changes resulting from the informational meeting?

There were not changes resulting from the informational meeting. Kristin Foster reiterated that Rufus Allyn has been asked to provide an estimate for the raising of Chippechaug Trail. As reflected in the presentation to residents on May 8, the strategies being considered by the task force

include (1) plantings to strengthen the shoreline, (2) the cost of raising the road, and (3) other possible measures to protect the marsh. Kristin also noted at the informational session that the task force has received an estimate for a protective wall from Docko. At a cost of \$3,000 per square foot, the wall would cost \$600,000. The Board also discussed the cause and speed of the erosion.

d. Committee on Traffic Volume – John Parry

i. Any changes resulting from the informational meeting?

John Parry reported that the Traffic Volume Report recommendations were well-received at the meeting. John noted that safety concerns were raised about the use of temporary stop signs used in the middle of the road, given that the roads are narrow. John suggested that, in light of these concerns, the signs be placed at the side of the road. John further reported that there was a recommendation at the meeting that the proposed five-month period for a 10 MPH sign by the Masons Island Yacht Club be changed to a year-round sign. After discussion, the Board agreed that it made sense not to change the proposal in this respect. There was further discussion about whether the recommended speed limit of 20 MPH was too slow. John presented data showing that the likelihood of serious injury or death was much lower for collisions at 20 MPH than collisions at 25 MPH. No changes to the recommendation were approved in this respect.

e. Traffic Control – Ethan Tower

Ethan reported that the guardhouse would begin 7 days a week staffing beginning this upcoming weekend. He noted that there were many residents who still need to obtain their green stickers and that the request forms would be available at the annual meeting. He stated that there had been 40 turn arounds this weekend, many of which were attributable to the new “Private Roads – No Trespassing” sign. More people were turning around before reaching the guardhouse. Discussion ensued concerning whether some of the signs should be changed or taken down. No action was taken on this agenda item.

f. Roads Committee – Tom Flaherty

The Board continued its discussion about the previously approved budget recommendation for treatment of the run-off on Yacht Club Road near the tennis courts. Board members expressed concerns that the run-off might be wastewater. Kits are available to collect run-off samples for review by the Town’s health department. Concerns were also expressed that fresh-water run-off should be redirected in a more useful manner.

g. Appointments – Ethan Tower

i. Traffic Control Representative: TBD

No action was taken on this item.

h. Annual Meeting – May 29 at 10:00AM – Ethan Tower

- i. **Public Notice – Tom Cooke**
- ii. **June 27, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes – Tom Cooke**
- iii. **Agenda – Ethan Tower**
- iv. **President’s Report – Ethan Tower**
- v. **Nominating Committee Report – Scott Parry / Kristin Foster**
- vi. **Treasurer’s Report – Bill Taylor**
- vii. **2021-2022 Budget – Bill Taylor**
 1. **Motion to approve the 2021-2022 budget for presentation to the voters at the annual meeting.**

Ethan Tower reviewed the proposed plan for the Annual Meeting on May 29, 2021 including the preparatory steps presentations required at the meeting itself. The Board previously approved the 2021-2022 budget for presentation to the voters at the annual meeting. Discussion ensued concerning the vote-taking process at the annual meeting. The Board agreed to proceed with voice votes with hand votes, to be counted by David and Lee, as necessary for more closely contested motions.

7. New Business

No new business was presented.

8. Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 8 at 5:30PM

An opportunity for socializing will follow the meeting on June 8.

9. Adjourn

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas F. Cooke - Secretary