

Mason's Island Fire District Meeting
June 8, 2021 – 5:30 PM
Masons Island Yacht Club
Minutes of Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by President Ethan Tower. Board members Thomas Cooke, Thomas Flaherty, Kristin Foster, David Krupp, Lee Hisle, John Parry, Scott Parry, William Taylor, and Board member-elect Bart Chamberlain were present. Roads Manager Rufus Allyn and Tax Collector Liaison Alex Ellison were also present.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Approval/Correction of Previous Minutes

a. Motion to approve the minutes from May 11, 2021.

There were no changes to the minutes provided to the Board.

4. President's Report – Ethan Tower

a. Emergency Calls for May; 31 for the fiscal year.

Ethan reported that he had no calls to report for May 2021 resulting in a total of 31 calls for the fiscal year.

5. Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor

Treasurer Bill Taylor reported that the Fire District came in under budget for the month of May. There were no other significant items to report.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Tick Committee – Jean Anderson / John Parry

i. Implementation plan for the new tick program.

John Parry reported on behalf of the Tick Committee. With the passage at the Annual Meeting of the Tick Committee's proposal to authorize the Fire District to collect fees to fund the Tick Program, John reported that he and Jean Anderson are working on the details of implementing the Tick Program sign up system. John stated that they are working on a sign-up form for distribution to residents at the end of the year or early next year. He noted that the challenge is engaging residents who do not respond. The Board discussed putting the form on the website and sending a reminder every year which would give residents the opportunity to change their service provider options. Ethan noted that putting the car sticker form on-line had been effective. John added that the Tick Committee wants the providers to start earlier, perhaps as early as March of next year. He added that Jean Anderson is staying on top of the treatment options. The same providers will be used in 2022 as in previous years.

b. Shoreline Protection Committee – Kristin Foster

i. Motion to approve feasibility study contract with GZA.

With funds for an engineering feasibility study available in the approved Fire District budget for 2021-2022, Kristin Foster presented the proposal submitted by GZA for approval. Kristin noted that preparation of the study would cost \$26,000 including a \$5,000 retainer. She explained that the proposal set forth five tasks: 1. Habitat Mapping and Spot Elevations; 2. Metaocean Data Analysis and Modeling; 3. Concept Plan, to include 3 preliminary design concept options for consideration utilizing shoreline components; 4. Meetings and Coordination, to include all meetings with the CT DEEP and USAC; and 5. the final Feasibility Study.

Ms. Foster also explained FEMA's rationale for the denial of the Committee's grant application for funding from the National Coastal Resilience Fund, stating that the primary explanation offered was that the project was too small for a grant.

Discussion ensued concerning whether it would be necessary to raise the road. Kristin stated that Rufus was getting a quote for the cost of raising the road. The Board also discussed the use of rain gardens – depressed areas on either side of the road designed to let rain runoff soak into the ground. Kristin noted that these are hard to do for a road because of the difficulty in measuring the likely amount of runoff. Surges can also destroy rain gardens, and other issues remain to be considered.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the feasibility study contract with GZA. The motion passed.

c. Committee on Traffic Volume – John Parry

i. Implementation plan for the new speed limit.

John Parry stated that Rufus would need to purchase the necessary signage for the approved change in the speed limit from 25 mph to 20 mph, as well as removable signage for the 10-mph speed limit by the Yacht Club. It was noted that the sign at the guardhouse had been modified to reflect the 20-mph speed limit.

d. Traffic Control – Ethan Tower

i. Changes to Dead-End signs.

The Board discussed the need for and possible changes to the Dead End/Do Not Enter signs. There have been fewer turn arounds and less traffic activity in recent weeks. Tom Flaherty suggested removing the new Dead End/Do Not Enter signs and discussion about what to do with signage ensued. Ethan stated that the issue would be taken up at the next meeting and that the Board would vote at that time.

e. Roads Committee – Tom Flaherty

Tom Flaherty commented that the Roads Committee would monitor Crossover Road to determine whether the current gravel and sand road poses a safety issue, particularly during the wintertime. Possible signage for the road was discussed. Lee Hisle reminded the Board that delivery trucks face safety issues when the road – which cannot be effectively plowed during the winter – ices up during the cold season.

f. Appointments – Ethan Tower

i. Traffic Control Representative: TBD

Ethan stated that he is in touch with other island committees to try to find a Traffic Control Representative.

7. New Business

a. Issues Raised at the Annual Meeting

i. Speed Limit Sign for Andrews.

The Board concluded that a review of Andrews Road, which is a narrow gravel road with trees and other objects close to its sides does not require a speed limit sign at this time.

ii. Dead End Sign for Osprey.

Ethan will speak with residents on Osprey to determine whether there is a problem with people parking at the end of the road and will get back to the Board with his findings.

iii. Remove Speed Bumps at the Guardhouse – 2 weeks.

The Board was informed that plans are in place for milling down the speed bumps at the guardhouse to reduce the risk of damage to cars going over them. The Board’s consensus was that, once milled down, the speed bumps provide a necessary speed deterrent at the guardhouse location.

iv. Send an Email when Something Is Posted to the Website.

The Board agreed that sending emails for routine postings to the website (such as minutes of the Board’s monthly meetings) would result in “email fatigue,” but that emails could be sent for special items (such as the Annual Minutes, Committee Reports, and other informational postings).

v. Include More Summer Residents on the Board.

Ethan suggested passing the suggestion along to nominating committees for them to take under advisement.

vi. Repair Seawall at Secret Beach.

The Board agreed that this was not within purview of the Fire District. Rufus Allyn pointed out that there may be permitting issues with any significant repair of the seawall. This may be a project for volunteers.

vii. Add a One-Way Sign and/or Speed Bump to Bayberry.

Because Bayberry Road is narrow, delivery and service vehicles can block traffic resulting in cars driving over lawns to get by. The road has also become an alternative to traffic traveling on Yacht Club Road as Bayberry has no speed bumps. Ethan will check with abutters on Bayberry to get further information before a decision is made by the Board.

8. Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 13 at 5:30PM

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas F. Cooke - Secretary