

**Masons Island Fire District Meeting
August 20, 2024 – 5:30 PM
Masons Island Yacht Club
Minutes of Meeting**

1. Call to Order

President Scott Parry called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Board members Jeff Miceli (Vice President), Ethan Tower (Treasurer), Ricardo Kleinbaum (Clerk), Audrey Brown, Kristin Foster, Thomas Giola, and Fran Hoffman were present. Also present were Louis Allyn (MICO Owner), Rod Cook (MIPOA Director), Bob Domurat (MIPOA Roads Committee rep), Kit Hartford, David Ludwig (Tick Committee), and Bill Pryor (MIPOA President). Board members Rufus Allyn (Roads Manager), Catherine Deichmann, and Bill Taylor (Tax Collector) were absent.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

Kristin Foster added a discussion on pond conditions as unfinished business.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the Meeting for June 18, 2024, as presented by the Clerk. The motion passed.

4. President's Report – Scott Parry

None. Comments on shoreline below.

5. Treasurer's Report – Ethan Tower

Referring to the FY24 financials, Ethan reported that Roads & Public Works expenses were over budget due to lawn restoration and maintenance of the area between 1 Seagull Lane and 207 Masons Island Road. On the income side, Ethan reported receipt of \$2002 (or \$186/house) from the Mason's Homestead Homeowners Association for shared guard and gate protection. Property tax collections stood at 93%

of billed amounts through August 15, 2024. Ethan anticipates interest income of \$20,000 which is, essentially unchanged versus last year.

6. Committee Reports

a. Fire & Safety Committee – Jeff Miceli

Jeff reported that during June and July, we had five events including two Emergency Medical Service Calls.

i. MI Emergency Plan Update – Kit Hartford

Kit discussed her work with MIPOA to develop a disaster preparedness and response protocol. Kit has been working with Rod Cook and former MIPOA Director, Betsy Lebel on this issue. They met recently with Captain Bryan Schneider of the Town's Emergency Management division to learn about the town's resources.

Kit noted that a disaster management plan should include identifying locations on the island where emergency personnel could land boats and helicopters, establishing a list of vulnerable or compromised residents, and recruiting MI residents to help with medical and physical infrastructure issues as part of a disaster event. There would be coordination other government authorities and fire districts in the area, according to Kit.

A discussion then followed on how MIPOA and MIFD could work jointly to create a written emergency plan document. Bill Pryor believes the final product would need to be endorsed by the local fire and police departments. Scott and Bill agreed to have MIPOA and MIFD work jointly. They designated Rod Cook and Jeff to jump start the project and report back on progress within one to two months.

b. Tick Committee – Dave Ludwig

Dave informed the Board of the cost and terms for deer feeders. The annual charge of \$9,400 is unchanged from

last year and includes 3 stations. The first feeding will begin on September 25, 2024, according to Dave. With regard to organic tick control options, Dave recommends we accept Bio Tech’s recommendation to switch from a cedar-based product to EcoVIA MT. This product also covers mosquitoes, and would be applied two times each season at a cost of \$220 per home. Scott indicated again that he will reach out to the community to identify a possible replacement for Dave to head the Tick Committee.

c. Shoreline Protection Committee

i. Update on Living Shoreline Plan – Kristin Foster

Kristin updated the Board on recent meetings held with grant representatives and the Mason’s Island Company (“MICo”) to consider a shoreline protection project agreeable to the landowner as well as regulators and grantors.

1. Kristin was advised by GZA Geo Environmental Inc. (“GZA”) and the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) that they would consider a revised shoreline projection project under a two year pilot with the use of rocks, known as Element 1. This path would require a revised design plan under a new contract between GZA and MIFD. The new plan would be subject to two conditions: 1) Conducting a more detailed two step sediment analysis at an additional fee of \$49.5K, though we might only spend half the amount, depending on whether the first study shows adequate natural soil build up to create a living habitat; and 2) Providing evidence that the primary project goal would remain protection of the shoreline, and not the road.
2. A discussion then ensued on how to move forward given the grantor deadlines and land access issues. Jeff pointed out that we could make a valid case of

meeting the shoreline protection goals required from DEEP and the grant providers with the single element 2 year pilot. He cited the positive evidence of sand accretion at the Hepburn Dune and Marsh site which the Shoreline Committee visited recently. Scott advised he will contact GZA with Kristin to explore this track, and propose deferring the addition of stage 2 (sand and plants), until we see how rock placement contained sediment accretion.

3. Kristin reminded the Board of the November 2025 filing deadlines set by grantors, and that a legal agreement granting third party access from MICO's property to the water is needed before staging and shoreline work can begin. She added that permits can take up to 18 months.
4. A discussion followed regarding which entities might apply for the shoreline project and potential sale of littoral rights from MICO. Scott advised that MIPOA should be the applicant with MIFD covering the costs. Scott also noted that funds earmarked for the shoreline project and approved by MIFD voters at the 2024 annual meeting could be used to cover both parties' legal costs associated with a littoral rights agreement, if necessary.

ii. Update on Riprap Plan - Tom Giola

1. Tom updated the Board on discussions for consideration of an alternative road protection plan exclusively on MIPOA property. He recommended selection of CLA Engineers, Inc. ("CLA") after soliciting proposals from six firms. CLA has agreed to generate a design plan to address

incremental erosion from the shoreline and protect the road.

2. According to Tom, the project would involve the construction of an underground ‘barrier’ parallel to the road to support the shoulder. The placement of rip rap (stone), or some other material below grade would serve to control future erosion. This initiative would potentially work in tandem with long term shoreline management projects. Tom also noted the need for a survey, given the limitations of GIS data on line.
3. Tom disclosed that CLA has quoted a \$18,840 fee to cover the cost of surveys, construction design and permitting. The engineering firm anticipates completion and presentation of final construction documents in mid January 2025, subject to town permits.
4. Tom indicated that the cost of installation of an underground barrier will depend on the actual design. He, nonetheless, anticipates that it will be lower than the projected expense for the Living Shoreline proposals presented through GZA. Although there would be no eligibility for grant funds, the permitting process should be much easier, according to Tom.
5. Following Board discussion, Scott presented a Motion to authorize payment of \$20,000 from the Roads Reserve to CLA Engineers Inc. (“CLA”) to design an underground barrier (rip rap) to be built on MIPOA property between a portion of Chippechaug Road and the shoreline, to provide a viable alternative to a Living Shoreline design. The intent is to work with CLA, and should MIFD not agree on contract terms with CLA, to hire another vendor. At the May 25, 2024 annual meeting,

MIFD voters authorized spending up to \$195,000 of the Roads Reserve on the next phase of the Shoreline Protection Project to protect Chippechaug Trail; the \$20,000 for this Motion is under that authorization. The Motion was approved by seven members of the Board present, with one abstention.

6. Kristin recommended we conduct an informational meeting for taxpayers to discuss the Rip Rap dual track. Jeff indicated this would make sense later in the fall once we have received a preliminary design from the engineers.

d. Traffic Control – Catherine Deichmann

Not present for comment.

e. Roads Committee – Tom Giola

Nothing to report.

f. Nominating Committee – Ethan Tower/Catherine Deichmann.

Nothing to report.

6. Unfinished Business

i. Pond –

Kristin reported on recent changes in the pond's ecosystem. There are signs of visual decay and malodor, according to Kristin. A discussion ensued on the possible causes (presence of duckweed) and remediation (the use of an aeration pump to release more oxygen into the water.) It was concluded that the Pond Committee should formulate a plan and report back to the Board.

7. Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 5:30PM

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ricardo J. Kleinbaum – Clerk, Masons Island Fire District