

Masons Island Fire District Meeting

November 19, 2024 – 5:35 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), Ricardo Kleinbaum (Clerk), Audrey Brown, Catherine Deichmann, Kristin Foster, Thomas Giola, Fran Hoffman, and Bill Taylor (Tax Collector) were present. Also attending were Louis Allyn (MICO Owner), Rod Cook (MIPOA Director), Bob Domurat (MIPOA Roads Committee rep), and Bill Pryor (MIPOA President). Ethan Tower (Treasurer) and Rufus Allyn (Roads Manager) were absent.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

None.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

Ricardo reviewed the process for editing and publishing meeting minutes. The discussion was prompted by Fran's and Catherine's concerns about the release of draft documents on the MIFD website and to the Town ahead of any formal Board approval.

- a. Ricardo explained that release of a draft version was necessary in order to comply with Connecticut legal statutes and Freedom of Information Act guidelines, which require every public agency to post minutes within seven days of a meeting, excluding week-ends and legal holidays.

BOARD APPROVED – REPLACES DRAFT FILED ON NOV 26, 2024

- b. To satisfy the regulatory requirement, Ricardo added and Scott corroborated, that MIFD will continue to publish PDF draft meeting minutes that are replaced by a final version highlighting Board approved changes at the following month's Board meeting. Ricardo also noted that the published draft always reflects the review and input of the MIFD Board for accuracy. Ricardo confirmed that this protocol aligned with the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission and "best practices" followed by other public agencies in the area.
- c. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the Meeting for October 15, as presented by the Clerk with one correction on p. 5: *Update on Underground Barrier ("Riprap") Plan. "In Tom's absence, Scott updated the Board on the CLA Design Plan for an underground barrier as a component of the Road Protection Project", replacing "Living Shoreline Plan" in the published draft.*

4. President's Report – Scott Parry

Scott informed the Board that a property owner has requested a list of addresses of homes covered by the Mason's Island Tick Control Program. Scott indicated that supplying the information might constitute a privacy violation. As a remedy, Scott suggested that next year's tick survey could include a question asking whether or not MIFD could publicly share information on a specific property owner's tick control selection. The Board agreed to the recommendation.

5. Treasurer's Report – Ethan Tower (not present)

- a. Scott referred to Ethan's November 2 email detailing format changes to the monthly statements.
- b. Scott also noted that property tax collections are essentially complete for the fiscal year ending June 2025.

6. Committee Reports

a. Fire & Safety Committee – Jeff Miceli

Jeff reported that during October we had six events, consisting of five Emergency Medical Service calls at three locations compared to two events during the same month in 2023.

i. MI Emergency Plan Update –

Jeff reported that he met with Father Tom Hoar to review the Emergency Plan and invite participation of St. Enders Retreat Inc to the MIPOA/MIFD initiative.

Jeff noted that contact lists for the eight Emergency Plan zones have been completed. Jeff stated that he is working on identifying Contact 1, which will lay the groundwork for naming Captains. Jeff anticipates that the communication plan will be finalized by the end of February 2025 with a final plan presented for MIFD approval in March. This will be followed by a community presentation by MIFD and MIPOA, jointly with Captain Schneider (Town of Stonington, Emergency Management), according to Jeff.

b. Tick Committee – Fran Hoffman, Dave Ludwig (absent)

Fran reported that a fourth station located on common ground, (though actually within MIFD) on the north side of Schoolhouse Road was added back to the Deer Treatment System. This move followed discussions with the neighboring Mason Homestead Homeowners' Association, according to Fran.

c. Shoreline Protection Committee

i. Update on Living Shoreline Plan – Kristin Foster

Kristin updated the Board on the recent Shoreline Task Force meeting and next steps for finalizing the Protection Plan.

1. According to Kristin, the proposed framework for the modified pilot project will consist of two types of rocks and two types of plantings in the affected area, with no sand material, as requested by the Mason’s Island Company (“MICO”). Kristin noted that a letter of permission is needed from MICO for access to the affected property to accompany the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) permit application, as discussed and reported in the September and October 2024 minutes.
2. Kristin reminded the Board that MIPOA will be the applicant, GZA Environmental Inc. will need to submit the Plan to DEEP as soon as possible with MICO’s permission to keep the project moving forward within the grant funded timeframe.

ii. Update on Underground Barrier (“Riprap”) Plan - Tom Giola

Tom updated the Board on the design plans to protect a portion of Chippechaug Rd, recent meetings with government agencies and the projected expenses if MIPOA/MIFD were to carry out the project.

1. Tom reported that half of the final design documentation has been provided by CLA Engineers, Inc.

2. Tom added that at a recent meeting (attended by Tom, Scott and a CLA Engineer) with the Stonington Town Planner and the Zoning/Wetland Enforcement Officer, they were advised of the restrictions related to the stockpiling of soil material materials in the FEMA coastal flood zone or “Velocity (VE) Zone”.
3. Tom also noted that the Connecticut DEEP would review the application as part of the Coastal Area Management application process to the Stonington Planning & Zoning Commission. Tom believes that a public hearing will probably not be necessary.
4. According to Tom, the project has been sent out to five contractors for budget estimates, and we have received one estimate for \$225K with an additional \$26K supplement to replace the existing drainage cross culvert under Chippechaug Trail, if necessary. However, Tom stated there would be no cost increase if we do not provide for an additional stockpiling location.
5. Scott then discussed the rationale for the MIFD Board Sub-Committee holding an informational (non-voting) meeting on the road protection initiative.
6. A discussion then ensued on the need to include MICO on the agenda at the meeting, as well as projected costs and options for the community on this time sensitive issue. Bill Pryor made the case for the road projection project, and was asked by

Scott to participate in the presentation. Kristin also agreed to provide an update of the Shoreline Protection Plan initiative.

7. The Board then agreed to schedule an in-person meeting on Tuesday November 26 at 5:30 pm at the Yacht Club. It was agreed that Catherine will post the meeting announcement on the guardhouse and Ricardo will notify the Town, both this week, upon receiving an agenda from Tom.

d. Traffic Control Committee – Catherine Deichmann

- i. Catherine circulated the October 2023, October 2024 and 2024 Season Traffic control data reports. She expects that the guard house contract price will increase in July 2025 and anticipates receiving price terms in January, as reported at the October meeting.

e. Facilities Committee – Tom Giola

- i. Referring to the Power Point Presentation circulated to the Board in October, Tom reported that Rufus suggested the need to reduce the top soil build up on the easterly shoulder at a Money Point Rd property. Tom explained that reducing this soil accumulation would allow some of the standing water to flow into the drainage pipe and away from the road. Tom expects the cost to approximate a few thousand dollars, and will aim to present a more price estimate to the Board in the spring.
- ii. Scott and Tom provided an update on the transfer of the Roads Manager function from Rufus to Bob D. Tom reported that MIPOA has issued a notice of termination letter to Rufus describing a transition plan for his duties.

Transition discussions began on November 17, and Bob will assume all Roads manager responsibilities effective July 1, 2025, according to Tom.

f. Nominating Committee – Catherine Deichmann.

- i. Catherine reported that the upcoming year’s nominating committee has been assembled, consisting of herself, Tommy Thomason, Gail Lane, Gay Reichart and Ethan Tower. A meeting will be scheduled in January 2025, according to Catherine.

7. New Business – Swale Repair – Chippechaug/Allyn’s Alley – Kristin

Kristin reported on the need to retrench the roadside swale along Chippechaug Trail at the corner of Allyn’s Alley as it has become shallow with grass growth. Kristin added that it will need to be more robust to handle the water and sediment flow after recent nearby house construction. Tom Giola advised that he had sent a letter to the new homeowner. It was agreed that Bob D and Tom would work together to address the issue, and report back to the Board.

8. Meeting: Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 5:30PM

9. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ricardo J. Kleinbaum – Clerk, Masons Island Fire District