



**Town of Camden
Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
September 17, 2013
6:30pm**

PRESENT: Chairperson Martin Cates, John French, Jr., James Heard, Leonard Lookner, Donald White, and Town Manager Finnigan. Also present were members of the press and public.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31pm.

2. Communications, Presentations, and Recognitions

A. Camden Windjammer Festival Committee - Presentation/Recognition

Don White read a proclamation to recognize the work of the Camden Windjammer Festival Committee. The Board expressed their appreciation to Committee members.

B. Written communication from Town of Farmington expressing thanks for the Town's contribution to the Lac Megantic Relief Fund

Pat Finnigan said that a letter had been received from the Town of Farmington to thank Camden for its contribution to the Lac Megantic Relief Fund.

3. Citizen Comments

Carla Ferguson of Camden spoke about her concerns regarding the Tannery property due to the work being done on the Rte. 105 Bridge.

Alan Hopkins of Camden invited the Board to consider his property located at 10 John Street for possible purchase.

Seeing no further citizen comments, the Chair opened the floor to comments from the Board.

Don White thanked the Department of Public Works for their extra diligence during the storm and afterwards, with many trees needing to be removed. He also recognized Public Safety and CMP workers who put in a great deal of time during and following the storm.

Don congratulated Ken Gross on his new position as Assistant Library Director. He also reminded everyone that the Camden International Film Festival is coming up.

Leonard Lookner recommended to the public that they attend the Common Ground Fair.

James Heard congratulated the Development Director on his recent marriage.

4. Approval of Select Board Minutes dated September 3, 2013

Don White made a motion to approve the minutes of the Select Board meeting dated Sept. 3, 2013. John French seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

5. Select Board Member Reports

Don White said he had attended a recent meeting of the Historic Resources Committee where the Camden Garden Club had delivered a report on improvements to the Village Green. White also told the group that the Camden Opera House Committee had prepared its first Annual Appeal for mailing in early November.

James Heard said he had attended a meeting of the Harbor Committee where opinions had been expressed about the gift of land along Bay Road that had been received by the Town.

Martin Cates reported on recent CEDAC and Downtown Network Board meetings. He said that CEDAC had set goals for the upcoming year, and that the committee plans to work in a supporting role with the Opera House Committee to look at an economic impact study for the facility. Cates said the Downtown Network Board is planning their approaches to projects contained in the Downtown Improvement Grant.

6. Town Manager Report

Pat Finnigan said that the final community meeting had been held the previous evening to present plans for the Riverwalk and Public Landing. She reported that the presentation was well received and that the concept plans had been posted on the Town's website. Finnigan told the group that the next step would be for the consultants to take comments collected during the meeting, to work them into the plans, and to refine cost estimates. She said that as part of their final report in early October, the consultants would deliver information on potential economic impact related to the improvements.

The Town Manager said that the recent storm had taken everyone by surprise and she commended Camden's Emergency Response personnel, including the Public Works Department for their efforts in cleaning up after the storm.

7. New Business

A. Consideration of the Town Manager's Appointment of Landon Fake as Parks and Recreation Director/Snow Bowl General Manager

Pat Finnigan introduced Landon Fake who had been selected for the position of Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of Camden. Finnigan said the Town conducted a national search and received 80 applications from Maine to California. She thanked the committee members who participated in the interview process: Rick Knowlton, Bob Gordon, Brian Robinson, and Carol Sue Greenleaf. Finnigan gave a brief overview of Fake's experience and background and invited him to make some introductory comments.

Donald White made a motion to approve the Town Manager's recommendation to appoint Landon Fake as Parks & Recreation Department Director and Snow Bowl General Manager. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

B. Consideration and Bid Award of a Public Works Department Plow Truck Chassis (chassis only)

Public Works Director Rick Siebel described the bids received for the plow truck and answered questions from the Board.

John French made a motion to award the bid to O'Connor GMC for their alternate bid, a 2013 Western Star 4700 for \$74,824. Donald White seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of the Special Town Meeting Warrant to be held on November 5, 2013, Confirmation of Election Warden, and Establish the Registrar of Voters' office hours for the November 5, 2013 Special Town Meeting

The Town Manager presented the six Warrant Articles for consideration for the Special Town Meeting on November 5:

1. Elect a Moderator
2. A proposed bond issue to borrow up to \$2,000,000 for improvements at the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area (Camden Snow Bowl)
3. Authorization to purchase real property located at 14 and 16 John Street (lots 25 and 26 on Tax Map 117)
4. Proposed amendment to the Camden Zoning Ordinance, Article VIII, Section 13 Business River District.
5. Proposed amendment to the Camden Zoning Ordinance, Article X, Performance Standards, Section 11: Accessory Storage Containers
6. Proposed amendments to the Harbor & Waterways Ordinance

The Board reviewed the items to be placed on the warrant. Discussion centered on the third item giving authorization for the purchase of real estate property on John Street. The general concern was whether or not enough information had been gathered at this time to place the item on the warrant. The Board gave consideration to tabling this issue.

John French made a motion to approve Warrant Article number 1 to elect Deb Dodge as moderator. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

John French made a motion to approve the following Warrant articles:

(2) A proposed bond issue to borrow up to \$2,000,000 for improvements at the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area (Camden Snow Bowl)

(4) Proposed amendment to the Camden Zoning Ordinance, Article VIII, Section 13 Business River District.

(5) Proposed amendment to the Camden Zoning Ordinance, Article X, Performance Standards, Section 11: Accessory Storage Containers

(6) Proposed amendments to the Harbor & Waterways Ordinance

Donald White seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Leonard Lookner made a motion to confirm Deborah Dodge as Election Warden, and Frank Stearns and Katrina Oakes as Deputy Election Wardens. John French seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Donald White made a motion to approve the November 5 Special Town Meeting Warrant excepting item #3, and to set the Registrar of Voters' office hours as the regular Town Office business hours (8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday) and all day on Tuesday, November 5 at the polling place. Leonard Lookner seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

D. Request to Renew the Knox County Inter-Agency Cooperation Agreement

Pat Finnigan said that Knox County, along with the Towns with Police Departments, have in place an inter-local agreement authorizing the Sheriff’s Department and the Police Departments to work together, to share information, to respond to incidents and to cover for each other with additional personnel is needed.

Leonard Lookner made a motion to renew the Knox County Inter-Agency Cooperation Agreement. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

E. Request by the Rotary to hold the 2nd Annual “Down the Chute” at the 2014 U.S. Toboggan Nationals on February

Jane Lafleur requested on behalf of West Bay Rotary to hold the second annual “Down the Shute” event during Toboggan weekend in February.

Donald White made a motion to allow the West Bay Rotary to hold the 2nd annual “Down the Chute” beer and wine tasting event at the 2014 Toboggan Nationals. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

F. Public Hearing: Peter Ott’s

Chairperson Cates opened a Public Hearing.

Renewal of Class I Restaurant Liquor License and Special Amusement Permit to Peter Masin Peters d/b/a Peter Ott’s located at 16 Bay View Street.

John French made a motion to approve the renewal of Class I Restaurant Liquor License and Special Amusement Permit to Peter Masin Peters d/b/a Peter Ott’s located at 16 Bay View Street. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

G. Public Hearing: Grand Harbor Inn

Renewal of a Class I Hotel Liquor License to Stuart Smith d/b/a Grand Harbor Inn located at 14 Bay View Landing

John French made a motion to approve the renewal of a Class I Hotel Liquor License to Stuart Smith d/b/a Grand Harbor Inn located at 14 Bay View Landing. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

8. Select Board Closing Comments

There were no closing comments.

Adjourn

John French made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Select Board and convene as Board of Assessors. Donald White seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Select Board adjourned at 7:23.

Board of Assessors

The Board convened as the Board of Assessors

1. Establish the 2013 Tax Commitment and Tax Rate

Wes Robinson, Assessors Agent for the Town, briefed the Board on issues surrounding the 2013 tax commitment and tax rate. Pat Finnigan summarized that during this time with the weak national economy, the tax base of Camden has not been growing as it had in the past. This, combined with the State of Maine reducing its funds to municipalities, had caused fewer revenues to be collected over the past year. Finnigan said that since the Town of Camden is committed to continuing to offer the services it currently provides its residents, a tax increase would need to take place to support this level of service.

Finnigan said that over the past 3 to 4 years, the Town has lost value, although there was a small increase in value this past year. Out of every one dollar of taxes, she said that 63¢ goes to the schools, 1¢ to solid waste, 7¢ to Knox County, and 29¢ to municipal services.

Robinson offered details on his assessments of new construction (valued at \$4 million), commercial and residential properties that have been demolished (totaling a \$2.7 million reduction in value), properties that had moved to tax exempt status (totaling \$550,000); properties that have left the tree growth program, and in a couple cases, multiple parcels that have been reduced to one property parcel, also causing a net result of reduced valuation. Robinson noted that Camden has held up well in comparison to some other mid-coast towns, but that increases in new construction could not overcome the reductions in value that had occurred.

John French suggested that the impact from the loss of state revenue sharing could be lessened by making up the \$135,000 loss through use of the undesignated surplus fund.

The Town Manager reviewed the financial status of the Town and said that the auditors had been pleased with the amount that is currently held in the "rainy day" fund, and in fact that Camden has slightly more saved than the amount that is generally recommended. Before the economic downturn, Finnigan said the recommended level was 8% to 12% of the annual budget Camden's fund balance policy is 16%.

Robinson told the Board that roughly each \$100,000 of value is worth about nine cents of the tax rate, so \$135,000 would make an impact by reducing taxes by 12¢ or 13¢ per \$100,000 in valuation.

There was discussion on the fact that Camden is currently very fiscally sound and that the municipality should do everything it can to stabilize the tax rate. The Town Manager noted that no one wants to over-tax people by keeping too much in reserve. The Town currently has extremely low bonded indebtedness, much less than similar communities, she added.

John French made a motion to hold a Special Town Meeting on Thursday, September 26th at 6:30pm to vote to appropriate \$135,000 of the undesignated fund balance to reduce the tax commitment. The Special Town Meeting would be followed by a special Select Board meeting to set the commitment and tax rate. Donald White seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Adjourn

Donald White made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Leonard Lookner seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Board adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary