

**TOWN OF MONMOUTH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2020**

PRESENT: Doug Ludewig – Chair, Timothy McDonald – Vice Chair, and Harold Jones – Board Member.

ABSENT: Dianna Boisvert – Board Member, Bruce Balfour – PW Director, and Doreen Christ – Recording Secretary.

ALSO PRESENT: Linda Cohen - Town Manager; Dan Roy – Fire Chief; Kevin Mulherin – Police Chief; David Shaw – CEO; Joe Fletcher – Parks & Recreation Director; Tamara Whitmore – Executive Director, Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed; Donna Shaw; and Sandra Schiller.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance. This meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Doug Ludewig – Chair, along with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes of February 26, 2020. There were two (2) changes made to this set of meeting minutes, by Douglas Ludewig. The two (2) changes were on Page No. 1, Item No. 3. Department Head Reports, in the first paragraph, line eight (8), delete the word, “*communication*” and replace it with the word, “*competition*”. Also, on Page No. 1, Item No. 3, third paragraph, line eight (8) delete the word, “*numbers*”, and replace it with the word, “*reimbursement*”. The following motion was made.

MOTION: *by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to approve the set of meeting minutes for February 26, 2020 with the above two (2) changes.*

VOTED: *3-0 (Passed).*

3. Department Head Reports. Kevin Mulherin – Police Chief reported attending training in New Gloucester with the MDOT on speed signs. His department will be getting a speed sign that will be placed in different areas of town and will keep a record of vehicles speeds. The Maine Municipal Association (MMA) will be providing required training for officers, will track their work, and keep a record of the training. Harold Jones asked that Chief Mulherin inquire about the placement of signs for “No Parking”. This item was briefly discussed at the last regularly scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting.

David Shaw – CEO commented that spring has sprung and reported that people are coming in for permits left and right. He has written several permits for buildings that will begin this spring. He mentioned that all paperwork for the new school has been completed. Overall, things are going well.

Dan Roy – Fire Chief reported his dept. as being very busy over the past two (2) weeks. Over the past 24 hours there were two (2) calls - a gas leak and a car accident this morning. He reminded everyone of the community dinner, which will take place this Sunday on March 15, 2020. Included in his report, to board members, was that there were two (2) funeral services held for Paul Fox and Dottie Gardner. He reported that between both services, the Fire Dept. had over 130 people visit the Center Station to eat and share memories. Also included in his report were a few old pictures from their recent training at Highmoor Farm on the rescue boggan with Winthrop Ambulance Service and a few members of the Cochnewagan Trailblazers. He reported that 30 firefighters walked through the newly constructed Monmouth Memorial School. Fire Chief Training took place on March 1, 2020, there was an NFA Trip meeting at Chief Roy’s House on March 3, 2020, and an Officer’s Meeting on March 5, 2020. He reported that in two (2) weeks, there are five (5) firefighters that plan to attend the National Fire Fighters Academy in Maryland for the Maine State Weekend training, however, this will likely not take place because of COVID-19 concerns. In April 2020, his department will be using the house next to the Medical Center for training in search and rescue, forcible entry, and ventilation operations. The home will be torn down after this takes place. He mentioned the Fire Prevention trailer that had been donated to them by the Sabattus Fire Department several years ago. He stated that this has served them well for the past seven (7) years. It needs a lot of work. They are donating it to the Town of Wales, along with the old Sparky costume. He said a quote for replacing the generator at the Center Station was for \$28,000. He is hoping that it can remain in service for another seven (7) years and then be replaced.

Linda Cohen – Town Manager stated that in front of board members, was a list of roads that Public Works will be doing some grading on. She reported that the Monmouth Conservation Commission has received the \$500 Grant they applied for to plant trees in honor of Maine’s Bicentennial. Linda Cohen stated that the Town Office staff will be taking all necessary precautions because of the COVID-19 virus. She mentioned the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC is at both the state and federal levels. The CDC will update on Monday of each week. She reported that once diagnosed, the

14-day incubation period will be prepaid whether an employee has sick time or not. She stated that the Town will provide as much information as they can on the Facebook page. She went on to say that there are a lot of on-line services that can be assessed, if you are not feeling well.

4. Authorizing Town Manager to Sign Letter with Maine Municipal Bond Bank. Linda Cohen made reference to her cover memorandum and the commitment letter, which were included in board member packets, that must be signed in order to close, which is scheduled for May 21, 2020, on the approved loan for the road construction on both the Gilman and Packard Roads. The commitment letter is from the Commissioners of the Maine Municipal Bond Bank who approved the application from the Town of Monmouth for \$990,000 for ten (10) years. The following motion was made.

MOTION: *by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to authorize the Town Manager to sign the commitment letter with the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for the Gilman and Packard Roads project.*

VOTED: 3-0 (Passed).

5. Approving the Details of the Bond for Sidewalk Improvements. Linda Cohen made reference to her cover memorandum and the required standard legal language regarding the general obligation bond for sidewalk improvements, as drafted by Bond Counsel Lee Bragg. These items were included in board member packets. The sidewalk improvements general obligation bond (\$350,000) is for financing for the sidewalk project along on Beach Road, Maple Street, and North Main Street. The following motion was made.

MOTION: *by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to approve the details of the bond for sidewalk improvements.*

VOTED: 3-0 (Passed).

6. Awarding Contract for Town Legal Services. Linda Cohen stated that the Town was fortunate to receive seven (7) proposals for Town Legal Services. Five (5) of the proposals quoted hourly rates and one (1) with a flat rate system. As stated in her cover memorandum, all of the firms who submitted are all highly reputable. They all have experience with municipal. The seven (7) proposals were from Amanda Meader - Winthrop, Eaton Peabody - Augusta, Brann & Isaacson - Lewiston, Jensen Baird - Portland, Trafton & Matzen - Auburn, Bernstein Shur - Augusta, and Preti Flaherty - Augusta. The one (1) firm submitting with a flat rate was Bernstein Shur, with a flat rate amount of \$12,500. She said that there is a lot included in this \$12,500 amount. Linda Cohen stated that she recommends Bernstein Shur, as the legal firm. The Town's Bond Counsel and the TIF Counsel are also with Bernstein Shur. This would bring all of the Town's municipal legal services under one umbrella, making for a smooth transition to the new firm. The following motion was made.

MOTION: *by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to award the contract for Town Legal Services to Bernstein Shur.*

VOTED: 3-0 (Passed).

7. Public Comment. Sandra Schiller thanked Linda Cohen on her update on the "coronavirus" issue.

8. Updates from Select Board Members. Timothy McDonald stated that the RSU#2 has formed a School Transition Team to turn over the buildings to the Town. There is a tentative timeline that has been developed from them. They are going to identify items in the schools that they may need at other places in the RSU#2. Then they are going to move those out. There will be a time where people from the Town of Monmouth will have an opportunity to purchase things in the school that we deem that we want to clean out of the place and then the RSU#2 will, at their expense, dispose of whatever we want to dispose of. Any art that is in there, is going to stay there. That will not be disposed of, but will not be moved to the new school. Personal art items, such as ceiling tiles, for people making inquiries, there will be an opportunity for them to get those things that they may have painted 20, 30, 40 years ago and that they are in the ceilings. All this has to occur between the last day of school approximately the 14th, 15th, or 16th and the time when the school is turned over to the Town. They may push the turnover of the school to the Town as late as the 15th of July 2020, but they do not want to go beyond that. The Town will probably have to fill the oil tanks for the next winter season and that will probably be \$80,000-\$90,000 or more to the Town. The Town, fortunately, has some money set aside, however, the Town will be looking for additional money in the next budget to be approved, so that the Town can at least maintain the schools in a warm condition while the Town tries to figure out where it is going. There is also a lot of interest in moving the old playground equipment, at the Monmouth Middle School. That was brought with federal grant money. The feds do not like you to move things. There is a procedure though for it and one (1) of the requirements is that it would need to be moved to a public place with 24-hour access. The Town would have to submit another grant request or grant change request. Timothy McDonald stated that he will be reaching out to a couple of people who originally wrote the grant, as well as the Town's own recreation committee, and will try to get all that together in the next couple of months to see where that will

take the Town also. There is a lot of interest in moving the old playground equipment to the beach area.

9. Warrant #19 - Payroll and Payables. Linda Cohen read a listing of items over \$1,000. The following motion was made.

MOTION: *by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to pay Warrant #19 – Payroll \$49,361.47 and Payables - \$484,208.00.*

VOTED: *3-0 (Passed).*

10. Departmental Budget Reviews:

- **Recreation (Account 2050).** Presenting this budget request was Joe Fletcher, Parks & Recreation Director. This year's budget request shows an increase from last year of \$83,925.00 to \$96,810.28. Increases were in Line Item Nos. 0116, Wages – due to the 2.5% COLA and the 27th payroll (about a ten percent increase) and Line Item No. 0655, Program Appropriation, from \$14,000.00 to \$15,400.00. This line item is for expenditures for all recreation programs. The high school basketball program pays for the basketball referees. He said he proposed to the committee that the registration fee be increased by \$5.00. There were 220 participants in soccer and basketball. This will cover the cost for 40 games (paid referees). Sandra Schiller asked questions regarding high school student compensation. Joe Fletcher said that compensation includes a letter from him which gives them community service hours. All the hours are kept track of and are compensated at the end of each season. There was a decrease shown in Line Item No. 0245, R&M Facilities, of \$3,800.00. This line item is for maintenance for the beachfront and mowing of the wooded area at the beach. There was no request placed in Line Item No. 0255, Sewer. Timothy McDonald asked why there is no money shown in this line item. This gets paid quarterly. Joe Fletcher will check into this. The Sewer Dept. needs to be asked what they are going to do. Timothy McDonald asked do they charge for one (1) connection or two (2). Timothy McDonald stated that he does not know how they charge – that's why they need to be asked. Line Item No. 0259, Telephone, shows a decrease in this year's request of \$860.00. Also, Line Item No. 0313, General Supplies, reflects a decrease. This line item is for supplies for the winter carnival/first aid supplies, etc.

- **Administration (Account 1000).** Linda Cohen presented this request. She stated that this has changed since the original budget in the wages line. Wages still show an increase, due to the 2.5% COLA and 27th payroll. The line item for legal services shows an increase from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Line Item 0603, Equipment, shows a decrease of \$3,000. This line item is for equipment upgrades and unanticipated equipment needs. Other than that, she said they tried to keep everything the same as last year's request.

- **Assessing (Account 1010).** Linda Cohen presented this request. The only change made this this year's budget is to Line Item No. 0237, Professional Services/Maps. This line item reflects a decrease of \$1,500.00.

- **Employee Benefits (Account 1060).** Linda Cohen presented this request. Line Item No. 0522, Retirement Benefits shows an increase from \$14,000.00 to \$21,237.47 and Line Item No. 0537, Social Security, from \$64,350.00 to \$66,281.00. This account is now combined and includes the Police Retirement Account.

- **Police Retirement (Account 1065).** Linda Cohen stated that there is nothing placed in this account, it was combined in the Employee Benefits Account.

- **General Assistance (Account 1070).** This account remains the same as last year's request.

- **Risk Management (Account 1090).** There was an increase reflected in Line Item No. 0802, Worker's Compensation, from \$75,000 to \$76,000. This line item covers bodily injury, death or disease resulting from or aggravated by workplace conditions or arising from the performance of assigned duties. Line Item No. 0803, General Liability Insurance, was increased by \$3,500.00. This is a general liability line covering sums which the Town may be obligated to pay by reason of liability imposed upon the Town or misstatement or misleading statement or act or omission or neglect or breach of duty, violation of civil right law(s) or unfair employment practices committed by the Town.

- **Special Projects (Account 1110).** Line Item No. 0504, Cemetery, shows a requested increase of \$3,000.00. The remaining line items remain pretty much the same.

- **Town Clerk/Town Meeting (Account 1130).** Line Item No. 0112, Stipends for Election Workers, reflects an increase of \$600.00. This covers the hourly wage for election clerks. Line Item No. 0212, Dues and Memberships, was removed from this account and was combined in the Administration (Account 1000). The line item with the largest increase was Line Item No. 0265, Training. This year's request was for an additional \$750.00. This line item is used for training through the MTCCA and MMA.

- **Treasurer (Account 1140).** There were no changes made to this account.

- **Unclassifieds (Account 1150).** There was an increase requested in Line Item No. 0535, Milfoil Inspection. The increase was for an additional \$6,050.00, mostly in milfoil inspections. Tamara Whitmore, Executive

Director of the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed presented the increase in the requests. The following is the breakdown of the requests, as follows:

- \$1,500.00 – Annabessacook Lake Improvement (for courtesy boat inspections and milfoil efforts),
- \$1,500.00 – Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed (boat inspections on Cochnewagan),
- \$5,000.00 – Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed (removal of milfoil from Annabessacook Lake) Harold Jones stated that if the budget is not in an acceptable range and an item would need to be cut, this would be one of the placed to be cut, however, he is not opposed to this request.
- \$1,650.00 – Cobbossee Yacht Club (courtesy boat inspections at the Public Boat Launch),
- \$750.00 – Tacoma Lakes Association (courtesy boat inspections at Woodbury Pond), and
- \$250.00 – Berry, Dexter, Wilson Watershed Association (courtesy boat inspections on Wilson Pond).

- **Revenues.** Linda Cohen presented this account. Revenues are up from last year at \$1,203,500.00 to this year at \$1,210,865.00. The increases include: an additional \$500.00 - Planning Board Site Plan, a slight increase in Parks & Recreation Registrations of \$400.00, \$15.00 - Transfer – Stickers, an additional \$1,500.00 - Local Road Assistance, and \$1,200.00 – Fire Department. Linda Cohen gave a brief summary of the budget. There were not a lot of increases, but there were some. She mentioned the Public Works street sweeper, parking lot items, etc. for a few. There was a discussion regarding stipends for the Board of Selectmen members. Douglas Ludewig stated that each board member currently receives \$2,000.00. Douglas Ludewig said he previously suggested \$3,000.00. It was then asked was it for \$1,000.00 total or \$1,000.00 each. Douglas Ludewig responded with \$1,000.00 each. Harold Jones said the stipend has not increased in 12 years. He then suggested a step approach and doing \$500.00 for this round of the budget. Harold Jones said it is a privilege to serve and that he did not object to the \$500.00 increase. He said to see what the final product is and if the budget looks good, he is not opposed to this. Timothy McDonald asked if there was another line for a Warrant question for at least another \$75,000 to support maintenance for the school buildings. Linda Cohen said that this is on her agenda that this will be needed.

11. Adjourn. The following motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: by Harold Jones, seconded by Timothy McDonald, to move to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 pm.

VOTED: 3-0 (Passed).

Respectfully submitted,



Doreen M. Christ

Recording Secretary - Town of Monmouth