

Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting – March 18, 2020

Attending via Zoom Conference Call: Jim McAuley, Bill Taylor, Kristin Foster, David Krupp, John Parry, Bob Banas, Tom Cooke and Lee Hisle. Not participating: Ethan Tower and Rufus Allyn. President Jim McAuley called the meeting to order at 5:54 pm. A quorum was on the call.

The meeting was conducted via a series of Zoom internet-based video conference calls with varying degrees of technical difficulty/success. Most of the meeting had all of the Board members listed above as Attending on the call.

Clerk's Report: M/S/P approving the minutes from previous meeting, February 11, 2020.

President's Report: Jim McAuley distributed emergency call report prior to the meeting. For the current fiscal year, there have been 20 calls with only one call in February.

Treasurer's Report: None in Ethan Tower's absence.

Old Business: (1) South Road Alternate Route – Discussion continued regarding the purchase of the undeveloped southerly section of South Road to provide an alternate route off the island if Chippechaug becomes impassable. Jim reported that Rufus Allyn wants \$40,000 for four acres of land adjacent to the road along with the roadway asserting that the four lots (\$10,000 each) can be built upon. If the lots are subject to the Nature Conservancy development prohibition, the basis for his valuation would be incorrect. It is not clear how to determine this, as Stonington town hall is currently closed to visitors. French has quoted \$10,000 to clear, widen and put gravel down in the roadway. There was also a discussion of how to structure the land acquisition. MIFD pays for the land and takes title, thereafter transferring it to MIPOA, or MIFD pays and the transfer is directly from MICO. to MIPOA. (2) Shore Line Erosion – Jim reported that the town engineer job is vacant. He made several attempts to contact Barbara McKrell, the acting town engineer and director of the Department of Public Works, but she has not responded. Rufus Allyn told Jim that the president of the Lords Point Property Owners Association has experience with erosion problems and might be a good resource to contact. (3) Succession Planning – The Board Nominating Committee members, Lee Hisle and Kristin Foster, reported that they had met with non-board members, Betsy Lebel, Dexter Murphy and Jeff Walker. There was considerable discussion of potential candidates identified to fill two upcoming board vacancies and filling the Vice President office with a view to succeeding Jim McAuley after one year. The Board settled on three primary candidates for Lee and Kristin to pursue. (4) Tick Tax Collection and Future Process – Bill Taylor reported from Jean Anderson that about half of last year's participants had signed up, about the same point as this time last year. Alex Ellison has been depositing checks. With regard to next year's spraying being paid

for from the MIFD budget, John Parry raised the issue of whether people who pay for tick boxes outside the program might be reimbursed \$200 by MIFD. The cost of tick boxes can range from \$600 to \$1,200, and without reimbursement, property owners would pay for the boxes and also the increased MIFD property tax that would support the spraying program. Of the 199 properties in the District, 118 participated in the spraying program last year, another 8 used Max Force Tick Boxes on their own, and 11 used some other form/vendor of tick control. John will speak to Ethan as to how difficult it would be to execute this approach. No action was taken to accept or reject this proposal. (5) Road Sign Replacement Pilot Program – Lee talked to the Yacht Club handyman and he offered to remove the old sign, dig a new hole, and install the new signs with concrete for \$85 per sign. This brings the cost of eight signs to \$2,665. There was a discussion of placing the new signs in prominent, high visibility locations so people would see them before voting on extending the replacement program at the annual meeting. Bob Banas will re-send his sign condition survey. M/S/P to proceed with the installation of eight signs subject to Ethan finding a source for the additional \$665 above the \$2,000 already available in the budget.

New Business: (1) Traffic Control Officers and Summer Schedule – Bob Banas secured three proposals for traffic control this summer – Areawide Protective - \$45/hour; Going in the Right Direction - \$25/hour; Ace Security - \$27/hour (same as last year). Areawide and Going Right appear to primarily provide traffic control at road construction sites, not the sort of uniformed presence we use, although they agreed to provide uniformed personnel as part of their bid. Ace provides services similar to ours to other clients. After discussion, the group decided to stay with Ace who responded to our requests last year. The second issue was the summer schedule. Should it be May 1 to Sept. 30 like last year, or Memorial Day to Labor Day that we used to do? Bob said that with the exception of July, with the fireworks and extended days of service July 4th week, the number of cars and turnarounds is similar for May, June, August and September. M/S/P to hire Ace for the same hours at \$27/hour for May 1 to Sept. 30. (2) Bob also reported that he checked by with Adventure Mystic Bike Rental that features a Masons Island bike tour in the brochure it provides to bike rental customers. Bob had asked the owner to delete the Mason Island tour last year and recently asked again. The owner responded that he was still thinking about it, and offered to remove the name Masons Island while still keeping the tour. Bob does not expect that the tour will be removed.

MIFD Meeting Calendar:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2020, 5:30 pm via Zoom conference call.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Taylor