

Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting – January 15, 2020

Attending: Jim McAuley, Ethan Tower, Kristin Foster, John Parry, Tom Cooke and Lee Hisle. Not in attendance: David Krupp, Bill Taylor and Bob Banas. President Jim McAuley called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm. A quorum was present.

Clerk's Report: M (John Parry)/S (Ethan Tower)/P approving the minutes from previous meeting, November 15, 2019.

President's Report:

Emergency Calls: Jim McAuley distributed a spreadsheet showing a total of 19 emergency calls fiscal year to date. This included a total of 4 new calls in November and 1 Call in December.

Treasurer's Report: Ethan Tower distributed updated Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual and Balance Sheet reports and reviewed them with the Board. He noted that approximately \$215,000 would be moved out of the Roads Reserve Fund to cover the costs of completed road construction, and that the Roads Reserve Fund would likely have a balance of approximately \$50,000 by the end of the year. A discussion of the cost and timeline for the remaining small road repair projects ensued, including a discussion of the economies of scale achieved by doing the projects at the same time. Board members noted that it would take some time to build up the reserve. No specific timeline was identified for the remaining projects at this time.

Ethan Tower also noted that MIFD has yet to receive a bill from its auditors for the 2017/2018 audit and that Rufus Allyn has not yet submitted his bill for services, and that there are accordingly outstanding liabilities.

M (Tom Cooke)/S (John Parry)/P approving the Treasurer's Report.

Unfinished Business

Shoreline Erosion – Allyn's Alley & Chippechaug: The Board discussed the risk to Chippechaug posed by higher waters and potential storms, noting that the current protection is a trench/channel installed several years ago. To date, high waters/storm waters have not reached the channel, which Ethan Tower estimates is now 5-6 feet from the current point of erosion. The Board discussed the potential for using an extension to Old South (currently a path that runs from Old South to Hickory Ledge) as an emergency exit, noting that it is subject to a conservation easement and that adapting the path for this purpose would have to be consistent with that easement.

Lee Hisle made the point that an engineer should be consulted to determine whether or not options exist and what those options might be for “hardening” Chippechaug to protect it from erosion and damage. After further discussion, Lee Hisle agreed to contact the Town of Stonington’s Engineer as a first step in finding the right resources.

John Parry noted that Julia Parry has been appointed to the Town of Stonington Climate Change Task Force and that she may have access to resources once on the committee.

Traffic Update – John Parry: John Parry stated that there were no updates at this time.

Tick Control: The subject of tick control was added to the agenda. John Parry noted that he, Jim McAuley and Jean Anderson are part of a committee created to determine how to continue a successful tick control program. He added that the committee will need the support of the new MIFD Tax Collector to send out notices to island residents. He added that the issue of whether the cost to participate is tax deductible remains an issue for some on the island.

The Board discussed whether or not MIFD should take responsibility for collecting the money to run a Tick Control Program as part of the annual assessment process. Board members noted that MIFD is already collecting funds to pay for the Lyme Disease Program and that funding a Tick Control Program would be consistent with existing practice. The Board also discussed alternatives, including asking the providers of tick control services to take responsibility for running the program. Board members also noted that the steps taken in recent years to implement a tick control program had resulted in significant improvement in the number of persons contracting Lyme disease.

John Parry stated that the committee would attempt to have a proposal ready for the next MIFD meeting.

Street Signs: Jim McAuley stated that the proposal for replacing 47 street signs included approximately \$1,900 for creation of the signs and approximately \$9,000 for installation. He added that he had hoped to obtain a sample to determine the quality and appearance of the street sign product. There was general agreement that the pictures of the signs included with the proposal looked good, and discussion ensued concerning whether MIFD would have sufficient funds to cover the cost. Ethan Tower noted that there is no specific line item for the project, although Road Maintenance might be an appropriate category for it. No final decision was made on the issue.

New Business:

Succession/Nominating Committee: Jim McAuley noted that his term on the Board will expire at the end of this year, as will Ethan Tower's. This will leave the Board without a President or a Treasurer. He urged the remaining Board members to consider whether they might step into these roles and alternatively to give some thought to who in the community might be both qualified and interested. Discussion ensued concerning Masons Island residents who might be able and willing to join the Board and potentially step into one or both of these roles, with Board members noting that some experience on the Board would be extremely helpful with the officer roles.

MIFD Meeting Calendar:

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 5:30 pm at 18 Money Point Road.

Meeting Adjourned – 6:43 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Cooke for Bill Taylor