

Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting – July 14, 2020

Attending: Ethan Tower, David Krupp, Bill Taylor, Kristin Foster, John Parry, Tom Flaherty, Scott Parry and Lee Hisle. Attending via Zoom Conference Call: Rufus Allyn. Not attending: Tom Cooke. President Ethan Tower called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm. A quorum was present.

Clerk's Report: M/S/P approving the minutes from previous meetings, June 9, 2020 and June 27, 2020.

President's Report: (1) Emergency Calls – Ethan reported that there were three emergency calls, one hazardous materials call and one rescue call, bringing the fiscal year total to 29. (2) Traffic Report – Vehicle turnarounds continue to be frequent with the greatest activity generally on the weekends. Just less than one vehicle per day refuses to stop which is a safety concern. There is one driver in a black SUV who goes through at 25-30 mph which is dangerous. The car does not have a Masons Island sticker. The turnaround figure may not be totally accurate since the guards get busy dealing with traffic at times, but they are consistent. Past Board member Bob Banas has emphasized that it is important to be in personal contact with the guard on duty every day. The resident at 203 Masons Island Road has sometimes parked his car in the widened road before the gatehouse which interferes with cars trying to turn around. Ethan will contact Stonington Police to see if they will put up a no parking sign as the location is part of the town's roadway. We are running low on car stickers but should be able to wait until fall to reorder. Ethan has stickers and will mail them to residents who need one.

Treasurer's Report: Prior to the meeting, Bill Taylor distributed updated Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual and Balance Sheet reports for FY 2019-2020. Ethan noted after the 2019-20 bills are paid, there should be about \$30,000 left that will be transferred to the Roads Reserve per the motion made at the annual meeting. Only two Masons Island residents have applied to defer paying property taxes to the town, so collections should be on a normal schedule.

Unfinished Business:

(1) Shoreline Erosion near Allyn's Alley – Kristin Foster reported that she had contacted DEEP on behalf of her working group that includes Jim McAuley and Rufus Allyn, and was referred to one person who referred her to Marci Balint, Senior Coastal Planner. By way of background for new Board members, Kristen explained that a culvert empties into the ocean and interaction with the waves has caused erosion, exposing more of the culvert. Kristin is looking at a living shoreline approach that involves regrading and plantings. Since DEEP does the permitting and wetlands approvals, the thought is that working with them will assure that the proposed solution receives approval. Rufus

noted his support for resolving the access problem during storms by addressing the shoreline erosion problem as the alternative, improving the southerly end of Old South Road, would still be only one way.

(2) **Street Signs** – Lee Hisle showed the Board a sample of the lettering and finish to be used for the street sign replacement project. The contractor is prepared to produce the eight sample signs to be installed for people to see before making the rest of the signs. There was some discussion about the design and location of the lettering. The posts are eight feet tall and 6" X 6". They will be installed with three feet in the ground. It was recommended that the lettering end at two feet above the ground to be visible above vegetation and snow, which may require adjusting the font size. The posts are in limited supply at lumber yards which may delay the project. It was recommended that the posts should not be circled with cement as this traps water and speeds rotting. The recommended installation would be to put the posts in the ground with gravel packed around them. The initial installation of 8 posts will proceed with the lettering and staining as presented by Lee.

(3) **Traffic Control Signs** – With MIPOA's agreement, MIFD will obtain four new traffic sandwich style control signs which will read: "Private Road - Dead End – Residents & Guests Only". The signs will be placed at the intersections of Chippechaug with Money Point, East Forest with Yacht Club, School House and Chippechaug, and Nauaug Point and Chippechaug. The yellow sign at the intersections of Chippechaug with Money Point, Nauaug Point and East Forest will probably become redundant and be removed.

(4) **Purchase of Old South Road by MIPOA** – There had been a proposal that MIPOA do a land swap to acquire the south end of Old South Road, which is currently impassible, and that MIFD would pay about \$12,000 to have grading and gravel installation to create a one-way link through to Hickory Ledge Road. Ethan noted that he did not know what the status is with this proposal.

New Business:

(1) **Recognition Gifts** – Motion to donate \$250 each to a charity of their choosing for departing Board members, Jim McAuley and Bob Banas. M/S/P

(2) **Report of the Committee on Traffic Volume** – John Parry summarized the recommendations of the committee which was comprised of himself, Rufus Allyn, Lee Hisle, Scott Parry and Jeff Walker (MIPOA). The committee released its recommendations in a report with extensive documentation about two weeks earlier. The recommendations were (a) Reduce the speed limit for all MIFD roads from 25 mph to 20 mph; (b) Reduce the speed limit further to 10 mph from May 1 to Sept. 30 on the roads bordering the Yacht Club; (c) Post new speed limit signs near the Yacht Club and in other problem areas (location to be determined); and (d) Instruct the traffic control

officers to remind visitor and contractors that the speed limit is 20/10 mph. In the following discussion, Bill Taylor recalled the spirited Annual Meeting discussion a few years ago when there was a proposal to reduce the speed limit to 20 mph. In light of the controversial nature of this proposal, Bill said that the changes should only be adopted by a vote at a meeting of MIFD voters. Ethan noted that the committee was founded by a motion at an annual meeting and should report back to an annual meeting. He also noted that MIPOA needs to approve the change as well, and that they will not meet again until Sept. John Parry said he had hoped that the report could have been presented to this year's annual meeting which was largely cancelled.

MIFD Meeting Calendar:

The next meeting is scheduled for Sept 8th, 5:30 pm at the Masons Island Yacht Club.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Taylor