

**Mason's Island Fire District Monthly Meeting
April 21, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Mason's Island Yacht Club**

1. Call to Order

- a. President Scott Parry called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. Board members Kevin Riley (Vice President), Ethan Tower (Treasurer), Ricardo Kleinbaum (Clerk), Catherine Deichmann, Kristin Foster, Jeff Miceli and Nancy Taylor Ross were present. Also present were Dave Ludwig (Tick Committee rep.), Bill Taylor (Tax Collector), Bob Domurat (Roads Committee rep), MIPOA Board members Jean Anderson, Rod Cook and Dan Walz. Tom Giola (Facilities Committee) was absent.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

- a. Discussion of the President's Letter for presentation at the annual meeting.
- b. Confirmation of time frames for bylaw changes, annual meeting announcement.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes –

- a. A motion was made and seconded to approve the March 2026 monthly meeting minutes after agreement to revise section 4 c of the Treasurer's report as follows:

Tom said he provided Ethan with a \$5K estimate for clearing no more than half the catch basins. It would involve an assessment over two years of the condition of each basin to determine the need for repairs and related budgetary allocations.

- b. The motion carried.

4. Treasurer's Report – Ethan Tower

- a. Ethan referred to the previously circulated Treasurer's report noting the contributions from the Mason's Homestead Homeowners' Association for the four poster tick control program and traffic safety. All other expense items were in line with expectations, according to Ethan.

- b. Ethan identified key adjustments to the proposed 2026/27 budget: A 35% increase in the roads maintenance budget to \$117K resulting primarily from higher snow plowing contract costs and a \$24K addition to Facilities management fees per MIPOA request. The Mystic Fire Dept contract expense will increase by 8.5% to \$417K, representing 61% of total expenses. Ethan also explained the accounting behind the tick program, given changes in timing applications. Ethan recommended retaining the mill rate at 3.4.
- c. Ethan noted the need to consider insurance offerings from a local broker in the future.
- d. Ethan reported that the \$74,200 allocated to the Improvement Projects budget relates to planned resurfacing of Hickory Ledge, Mallard Road, and the west side of Osprey. The Board acknowledged the need to confer with homeowners in the affected areas ahead of any project.
- e. Ethan then made the following motion:

Move to approve the revised 2026/2027 budget proposal as prepared by the Treasurer for presentation and final approval by the voters at the May 23, 2026 annual meeting.

The motion was seconded by President W. Scott Parry and approved by all Board members.

5. Committee Reports

a. Fire & Safety Committee (Emergency Preparedness) – Jeff Miceli

- i. Jeff disclosed the revised terms reached with the Mystic Fire Dept (“MFD”): The annual increase would be capped in each of the first two years as follows: 2026/27 - +9% 2027/28 +7.5%. In years three to five, the annual increase would be the higher of a 4% increase or the change in the consumer price index year on year. For the remaining five years, the parties agreed to negotiate terms in the future. (The proposed contract would enable either party to terminate at any time upon twelve month’s written notice.)

- ii. Kevin made the following motion which was seconded by Scott Parry.

Accept the negotiated Mystic Fire Department contract proposal.

The motion was unanimously approved, after a discussion of the negotiated terms and anticipation of signing before the annual meeting.

- iii. Scott reported that he approached the First Selectman to discuss the overlap of fire management services in Stonington. Scott pointed out that consolidation of equipment and services could result in lower and more rational pricing.
- iv. In light of his departure from the Board at the end of the current fiscal year, Jeff recommended that MIFD retain a board member to service as a contact for the Emergency Preparedness effort. He cited the need to have someone available to send out emergency communications to the community. Scott agreed to train Nancy and Ricardo as back ups for the Constant Contact system.

b. Tick Committee – Jeff Miceli/Dave Ludwig

- i. Dave advised that we is still waiting for contract documents from Seascope. He anticipates the first treatments will be applied mid-May with advanced notifications to the community planned earlier in the month. Jeff indicated that he is willing to serve as a technical advisor to MIFD and assist with survey design and compilation of results.
- ii. Jeff agreed to serve as a technical advisor to the MIFD tick program and assist with the survey and results compilation. Scott agreed to support Jeff in this effort.
- iii. Dave reported an increase in the share of taxpayers selecting bifenthrin (synthetic) over the cedar (organic) product for the upcoming season.

c. Traffic Control - Catherine Deichmann

- i. Catherine said the annual meeting announcement signs are ready, and plans to post on the guard house later in the week. She has finalized plans with Ace to beginning staffing the guardhouse on May 15.

d. **Nominating Committee – Kristin Foster, Kevin Riley**

- i. Kristin reported on the Committee’s progress for the 2026/27 Board line up. The Committee is still trying to identify a third nominee, and may consider candidates who can participate remotely. (Once the last slot is addressed, the Board would move to adopt a motion to recommend the candidates to shareholders for approval at the upcoming annual meeting.)

e. **Facilities Committee – Tom Giola (absent), Bob Domurat –**

- i. MIPOA and MIFD board members discussed the division of responsibilities for future facilities and road management in light of Tom Giola’s resignation and Bob Domurat’s decision to not seek another term in the next fiscal year.
- ii. Jean Anderson summarized the outcome of an informational meeting on March 30 hosted by MIPOA with participation of the Facilities Committee and Kevin Riley. She indicated that consideration is being given to hiring an outside property manager (which is currently supported by the MIPOA Board.) Ethan confirmed that MIFD proposes allocating \$24K funds in 2026/27 for the hiring of a Roads Manager.
- iii. Board members then discussed implementation of the plan. Jean stressed the importance of segregating the ongoing Roads maintenance responsibilities of an outside property manger from the permitting review and surveillance function under the Facilities Committee. Kevin added that MIPOA and MIFD leadership would play a role in addressing non compliance with Ordinance and permit standards, as laid out in the Ordinance re Permits to Work on Excavate In or Under MIFD-managed roads,

adopted in May 2023. He also noted the practical and legal constraints of enforcement.

- iv. Ethan, Jean and Scott then exchanged views on how to present the facilities management changes, future protocol as well as roads reserve funds utilization at the annual meeting. Scott noted that working out the details will take time.
- v. Kristin reported on volunteer trail clearing around the nature reserve.

6. Unfinished Business – Remote Meeting Participation

- a. Ricardo updated the Board on pathways for enabling Board member participation in monthly meetings. Based on Ethan’s input and further research, Ricardo concluded that the use of electronic communications at MIFD meetings is permissible under Connecticut Fire, Sewer and Other District statutes. Ricardo discussed MIFD’s plans with the Director of the Connecticut FOI Commission who indicated that other fire districts have adopted electronic (remote) access, and there is no conflict with would not conflict with the State’s Freedom of Information Act.
- b. Consistent with Board discussions in February and March as well as Ethan’s research, Ricardo recommended adoption of Scenario of the Roberts Rules “Newly Revised Rules”: ”A speakerphone in the meeting room to allow members who are not physically present to participate by telephone”.
- c. Ricardo explained that Section 19 of MIFD bylaws require conformity with Roberts Rules of Order which stipulate that “any electronic meeting must be authorized in the organization’s bylaws, and that additional rules should be adopted to govern their conduct.”
- d. Accordingly, Ricardo made the following motion:

To present and seek final approval at the May 23 2026 annual meeting to amend the “Meetings” section of the bylaws as follows: Meetings of the Board shall be conducted in person, and may provide for Directors outside of the physical quorum to participate through use of telephonic equipment or internet.

The motion was seconded by President W. Scott Parry and approved by all Board members. Board members agreed to develop further rules implementing the use of electronic communications after the annual meeting.

7. New Business – Discussion of Signage at the Traffic Control Booth (“TCB”)

- a. Scott summarized his longstanding discussions with Lou Allyn (MICO) to streamline signage at the entrance to the community. He recommended improving the aesthetics and replacing the existing three signs with a single one (aside from the camera sticker).
- b. A discussion transpired on the permissibility of temporary signage at the Guard House. Board members were of the belief that temporary road signs has been permitted, according to Catherine.
- c. A discussion followed on possible replacement options for the existing sign. Kevin circulated a prototype sign. Scott recommended against utilizing “no trespassing” on any future sign.
- d. A discussion followed on what agreement, if any, had been reached with MICO to post a new sign at the TCB. Board members referenced MICO’s October 2025 decision to require any party seeking to post a sign to submit a written application for approval by MICO as well as the March 2025 settlement (Motion for Judgment on Consent) between several Mason’s Island taxpayers and St. Edmunds.
- e. Ethan noted that under the 2007 Roads Transfer Agreement*, MIPOA retains the right to utilize the guard structure for traffic control purposes, and that by extension MIPOA has been able to approve all signs.
- f. The Board agreed to have Kevin negotiate signage placement and language with relevant parties.

** Section K states: The Entrance Building will thereafter be maintained by MIPOA to allow the employment of traffic control personnel to control passage of vehicles and people.*

8. Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 5:30 pm

9. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 pm. It was seconded and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ricardo J. Kleinbaum – Clerk, Masons Island Fire District