

Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting – February 11, 2020

Attending: Jim McAuley, Bill Taylor, Ethan Tower, Kristin Foster, John Parry, Tom Cooke and Lee Hisle. Not in attendance: Rufus Allyn, David Krupp and Bob Banas. President Jim McAuley called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. A quorum was present.

Clerk's Report: M/S/P approving the minutes from previous meeting, January 15, 2020.

Treasurer's Report: (1) Ethan Tower distributed updated Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual and Balance Sheet reports. He noted that the cost of plowing has been paid. The Masons Island Company has billed for construction management fees and is now up to date. \$213,681.50 has been moved from the Roads Reserve to cover last fall's repaving costs leaving a balance of \$40,899 in the Roads Reserve. The Stonington Fire Department has been paid in full. Connecticut Water has not yet increased their billing to reflect the last fire hydrants installed. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Unfinished Business: (1) The District still needs a person to coordinate with the Stonington Tax Collector. Lee Hisle will make one more try to contact the person who expressed interest last year but has not responded to any subsequent contact. (2) New Road Signs – The budget contains \$2000 that could fund a pilot program of eight road signs at a cost of \$200 each, plus installation. Lee Hisle will discuss installation with the Yacht Club's new handyman and will talk with Bob Banas who has surveyed all the existing signs. There was discussion about whether the pilot program should fix the worst signs first, or the most prominent, such as along Chippechaug. Following the pilot program, a complete replacement program could be authorized at the annual meeting. Lee will put together a proposal regarding which signs will be replaced initially no later than the next MIFD Board meeting. (3) Shoreline Erosion – The erosion near Allyn's Alley is about 5-6 feet from the stone reinforcement installation done a few years ago. Jim McAuley and Lee will meet with the Stonington Engineering department to discuss solutions. (4) Succession Planning – There was extensive discussion of possible new Board members and the need to fill the President and Treasurer positions. Lee and Kristin Foster agreed to form a search committee with the required addition of three non-Board members. (4) Tick Spraying Program – John Parry reviewed the write-up that he had distributed prior to the meeting. This year the program will be similar to past years, but without the assistance of a FD tax collector. Participation will be requested via the MIPOA e-mail list, with homeowners selecting the spray companies individually and paying the cost through MIFD. The proposal was made to have the FD pay the cost of spraying starting in 2021 as part of its budget, with homeowners still electing whether to spray and selecting a vendor. M/S/P to propose and recommend to the FD voters at the annual meeting that the budget will include and MIFD will pay the costs of annual tick spraying starting in 2021.

New Business: (1) Ethan noted he was starting work on the 2020-21 annual budget. (2) Ice Pond – Bob Martin, as president of MIPOA, contacted Ethan Tower to ask whether the FD would continue to bear the cost of annual maintenance of the pond after MIPOA buys it from the Masons Island Company for \$1. Currently the FD pays about \$5000/year for treatment of algae under the District’s beautification, health and welfare powers (see Bylaws Sec. 3d, “maintain...recreational facilities”). A much larger issue and cost would be clearing the accumulated muck from the bottom of the pond, although it is not clear that that necessarily follows MIPOA’s acquisition. It was proposed that the Fickes, as pond managers, be invited to attend the next Board meeting, and that a meeting be set up with MIPOA board members to discuss this. (3) Old South Road Emergency Route – If a storm were to erode Chippechaug near Allyn’s Alley to the point of impassibility, there has been discussion of using Old South Road as an alternate route to leave the island. Currently, the southern portion of Old South Road is not paved or owned by MIPOA but is part of a larger parcel of land that is subject to a Nature Conservancy easement restricting development. Lee noted that he recently drove this route in its present condition, although in four wheel drive mode. There was some discussion of whether the FD should purchase the roadway land or obtain an easement and install gravel to make it a better alternative escape route. (4) There was a discussion of sending a bill to Enders Island for fire protection, paving and road maintenance, and hydrant costs.

MIFD Meeting Calendar:

The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2020, 5:30 pm at 18 Money Point Road.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:08 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Taylor