

Mason's Island Fire District Annual Meeting - May 26, 2018

President Jim McAuley called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Jim noted that the meeting would follow Robert's Rules of Order and requested no sidebars while someone recognized by the chair was speaking. He asked that those wishing to speak raise their hand, stand when recognized by the chair, and state their name before speaking. Jim read the section of the MIFD Bylaws that set forth eligibility for voting and asked that anyone ineligible to vote raise their hand. No one raised their hand. The Clerk confirmed that a quorum (15 or more voters) was present. Jim introduced the current slate of officers and Board members: David Krupp, Vice President; Ethan Tower, Treasurer; Bill Taylor, Clerk; and Directors Robert Banas, Greta Jones (absent), Kristin Foster, John Parry and Lee Hisle. He thanked the Board for their service. Minutes of last year's Annual Meeting were distributed with the package of materials for this year's meeting ("Advanced Meeting Distribution" or "AMD"). M/S/P to waive the reading of the minutes and M/S/P to approve the minutes as written. Jim noted that the President's Report was included in the AMD.

Report of the Clerk: For the Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the MIFD Board of Directors met seven times and there was a quorum at all meetings. The meeting notice for this meeting was published per the Bylaws in The Day on Thursday, May 10th. The Agenda for this meeting was posted in the Town Clerk's office on May 22nd. Agendas for future meetings and a schedule of future meetings will be filed with the Town Clerk's office in advance.

Treasurer's Report: Ethan Tower reviewed the Financial Summary: Budgets & Actuals that was handed out at the meeting, comparing the first three columns: Actual 2016-2017, Projected Actual 2017-2018 (through 6/30/18), and Budget 2017-2018. The reverse side of the Summary showed the Road Maintenance: Budgets and Actuals with the first three columns with the same headings. Ethan noted that Road expenses were at or below budget except for Clearing Trees and Brush due to storms, and also that we will have spent \$9,500 of the budgeted \$10,000 on Unplanned Storm Cleanup. Capital Improvements for Roads were slightly under budget. For this fiscal year, Ethan projected that the Roads Reserve which began at \$225,454 should end the year at \$206,585 after Capital Improvement expenditures of \$72,853 and the transfer of \$53,983 of Excess funds. Of note on the Financial Summary side of the report: tax revenue was about \$1,000 above budget, Interest and Miscellaneous income were up, Traffic Control and Safety costs were up, and the cost of the annual financial review had increased to \$2,500 after being held at \$1,500 for 10 years. Unreserved Cash will be at the recommended level of about six months expenses.

After a few questions, M/S/P to accept the Treasurer's report.

Committee Reports:

1. **Security and Traffic Report:** Bob Banas referred to the materials that had been sent out which included the Traffic Post Orders given to Ace's employees and a letter regarding security. The traffic control schedule has been expanded to begin on May 4th weekend and continue to the October 8th weekend, plus the full week of July 4th. Bob noted that everyone should use the red Masons Island stickers and that cars would be stopped starting next weekend if they do not. He also noted that the speed limit remains at 25 mph and that there is no passing allowed. After last year's meeting, MIPOA formed a safety committee which issued a report, Security on Masons Island, and recommended installation of security cameras and a license reader. There would be a one-time cost of \$4,000 which is reflected in the proposed 2018-2019 budget. Bob opened the floor for discussion.

Bob Martin, President of MIPOA, described the system which would include two cameras and a license reader connected to a hard drive which would store information for 30 days. Only the Roads Committee would have access to the information. If there were an incident, the information would be made available to law enforcement. The MIPOA committee spoke with the Stonington Police Department and they said that installing cameras was the best thing to do to improve security. Lydia Herd read a statement about security issues including a medical emergency involving five police cruisers at Enders Island in April, 2018. She also raised the possibility of drug transactions taking place in the MIYC parking lot. She urged people to report suspicious activity to the police. Someone else raised the question of using the cameras to do a traffic count to which Bob Martin replied that MIPOA is acquiring two traffic counters for use in the Fire District.

Margo Larkin moved that the speed limit be lowered to 20 mph. There was a general discussion of speeding, requiring a full stop at the stop signs, and the effectiveness of using odd limits such as 22 or 18 mph. Bob Martin noted that when MIPOA borrowed the town's speed monitor a few years ago, we learned that most people do observe the speed limit. He also questioned whether drivers that ignore the 25 mph limit would observe a 20 mph limit. Frank Marco suggested that the motion be tabled after which Margo withdrew her motion. Scott Parry then made a motion that the MIFD Board form a committee to study the speed limit and report back at the next annual meeting. This motion was seconded and passed.

2. **Tick Report:** Jean Anderson described this year's efforts to coordinate spraying for ticks. The MIPOA list was e-mailed twice and individual efforts were made for non-respondents. One hundred ten properties participated in property tax billing program for tick abatement and eighteen property owners also do individual tick abatement. The 64% total participation rate is in line with recent years. Treatment is in process. There were two incidents of tick disease in the district last year. Mary McAuley runs the four poster deer feeding/treatment program which is still important although there seem to be fewer deer. Jean noted there will be changes in the program next year. Participants will be asked to send their check in with the sign-up sheet. Jean asked for volunteers to help with contacting homeowners next year and thanked Mary McAuley and Lydia Herd for their help this year. M/S/P to accept the Tick Report.
3. **Pond Report:** Lou Allyn reported that the pond is in good shape except for algae blooms. These are treated with Captain XTR, a chelated copper compound which destroys chlorophyll but is harmless to humans, pets and fish. There was a bloom in early May that was treated and there will probably be another treatment around June 1st. Jeff Walker and Lou pull out the water lilies which can overwhelm a pond quickly otherwise. The fountain on the pond is again operating thanks to Chris and Martha Ficke. Lou asked that people not feed the ducks. M/S/P to accept the Pond Report.
4. **Nominating Committee Report:** Kristin Foster delivered this report. The Committee consisted of Kristin Foster and Lee Hisle from the MIFD Board, and, as required by the Bylaws, three non-Board members, Jeff Walker, Suzie Canning and Kyle Anderson. Three Board members' terms expire at the end of June, Lee Hisle, Kristin Foster and Greta Jones. Lee and Kristin were willing to serve for another term. The third nominee is Thomas Cooke. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Kristin presented the following slate of Officers for the fiscal year 2018-2019 and the following members of the Board (new terms in bold):

| | | Term Ending |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| President | James McAuley | 2020 |
| Vice President | David Krupp | 2019 |
| Treasurer | Ethan Tower | 2020 |
| Clerk | William Taylor | 2019 |
| Director | Robert Banas | 2020 |
| Director | Lee Hisle | 2021 |
| Director | Kristin Foster | 2021 |
| Director | Thomas Cooke | 2021 |
| Director | John Parry | 2019 |
| Tax Collector | Lydia Herd | |

Jim McAuley asked if there were other nominations from the floor. Hearing no other nominations, Jim moved to close the nominations and accept the report of the

Committee. M/S/P to accept the slate of Officers and elect as Directors Lee Hisle, Kristin Foster and Thomas Cooke to three year terms.

Presentation of Annual Budget: Ethan Tower presented the Budget for 2018-2019 that was set forth in column four of the Budgets & Actuals discussed above. The budget for Clearing Trees and Brush was increased by 50% or \$6,300. Crack & Seal was removed from the budget as a full day's work is not necessary with the improved roads. If necessary, Crack and Seal will be paid for from the Road Reserve funds. For the overall budget, Tax Revenue will fall by \$5,500 due to the decline in home values from the recent Stonington reassessment. Road Maintenance is projected to decline by about \$5,000. Fire Protection costs are up with the fire company costs rising 2% or \$932, and Connecticut Water Co. fire hydrant service rising \$2,425 due to an increase in the number of operating fire hydrants. Traffic Control increased by \$8,770 due to the increased weekends of coverage and the \$4,000 for traffic cameras. The mil rate remains the same. Ethan noted that Connecticut Water will not be making as much of a contribution to MIFD paving this year as their contractor did more full road paving as part of its work. The budgeted \$132,523 Capital Expenditures may not be fully used as less road needs to be paved by the District. If we get enough money from Connecticut Water, we may be able to complete all the planned repaving in FY 2019-2020.

Ethan requested a motion to approve moving the excess for 2017-2018 to the Reserve Fund for Roads. M/S/P unanimously. Ethan then requested a motion to approve the 2018-2019 budget as presented, including taking \$132,523 from the Roads Reserve to repave Skiff Lane, Money Point Road, Huckle Berry Lane and Bayberry Lane in the fall of 2018. M/S/P unanimously.

New Business:

1. **Excavation Ordinance:** John Parry spoke about the Excavation Ordinance materials that had been included in the AMD. The purpose is to protect the investment we have made and continue to make in the road repaving work by governing the process of digging in the roadway and abutting areas. There was some discussion during which John explained that the ordinance would apply to work done in the right of way and land owned by MIPOA. A permit for brick work along the roadway would depend on the lot lines. John also noted that the concern about brick work is due to bricks being dislodged by snow plowing and that the homeowner could sign a waiver releasing MIPOA from obligation to restore the bricks. After some further discussion, M/S/P to adopt the ordinance as presented.
2. **Tax Collector:** Lydia Herd will resign as tax collector at the end of the next fiscal year in June, 2019. Ethan Tower proposed that we use the Town of Stonington tax collector as all the other local fire districts do with the exception of MIFD and Pawcatuck. The cost

would be around \$2,000-\$2,500. There would still be a need for a MIFD Tax Collector to coordinate with the Town. Further clarification of the MIFD Tax Collector's responsibilities will be made in the next year. After some discussion, M/S/P to accept the Town of Stonington as tax collector for the fiscal year 2019-2020 and thereafter.

3. **Trash and Trash Collection:** Catherine Deichmann addressed the meeting on the subject of trash, noting that she had collected 250 lbs. of trash along MIFD roads since April of this year. She noted that the town had been sending only one truck for trash and recycling pickup, thereby thwarting recycling. She contacted the Town and they have responded by sending two trucks since last month. If they switch back, she urged people to contact the Town Solid Waste disposal representative.
4. **Fire Calls:** Cathy Marco asked to hear statistics on the number of fire calls for this fiscal year. Jim McAuley responded that there had been 19 calls consisting of: 2 false alarms, 2 public service, 4 smoke detectors, 6 EMS, 4 miscellaneous, and 1 Enders Island.

Jim McAuley noted that the next annual meeting would be Saturday, May 25, 2019 at 10:00 AM and requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. M/S/P

Meeting Adjourned – 11:35 am

Respectfully submitted

Bill Taylor