

TOWN OF CHINA

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Select Board Meeting

Monday – 01/25/2016 – Town Office Meeting Room

7:00 P.M.

Minutes

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7:00 p.m. Board members present were Irene L. Belanger, Robert MacFarland, Neil Farrington, Ronald Breton, and Joann C. Austin. Others present were George Weber, Jim Isgro, Kevin McLaggan, Bob Bennett, Bruce Fitzgerald, George Aronson, Jim Guerra, Jessie Pottle, Greg Louder, Mary Grow and the Town Manager. All present were led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag by the Chair, Robert MacFarland.

On a motion by Selectperson Irene L. Belanger and a second by Selectperson Robert MacFarland, the Board voted 5-0 to accept the minutes of the 12/28/2015 Select Board meeting as amended.

On a motion by Selectperson Irene L. Belanger and a second by Robert MacFarland, the Board voted 5-0 to accept China Payroll Warrant #37 for \$20,332.32, and Town Payables Warrant #38 for \$66,143.52 as presented.

Unfinished Business:

- **Public Comment:** There was not any public comment at this time.
- **Transfer Station Committee – Mission/Deliverables Expected:** The Board discussed the PPT program particulars at this time. They noted that they have scheduled three public informational sessions regarding the program to be implemented on July 1, 2016 for a trial period. The first session is scheduled for Saturday, January 30, 2016 at the China Middle School to begin at 10:00 a.m. The other two sessions are scheduled for February and March of 2016. After allowing residents try the system, which allows for disposal of MSW in special China bags to be purchased at local stores, over the summer and fall and to hold a referendum in November to have voters decide whether or not to continue the program. The expectation is to reduce transfer station costs by increasing recycling and decreasing the amount of waste that has to be sent to Orrington for processing. Tipping fees and transportation costs will be reduced as a result. Moreover, and depending on the commodities market, recycled items often bring income to China.
- **Committee/Organization Reports – Selectperson Belanger: RSU#18, KVCOG, Economic & Community Development, Mid-Maine Chamber and KRDA Updates – Selectperson Belanger:** Selectperson Irene L. Belanger reported the following: The reports were postponed to the next meeting because of the robust agenda for the evening.
- **MRC – Fiberight Proposal and Post 2018 MSW Disposal Options – Greg Louder, Executive Director of the MRC:** It was noted that a long term MSW disposal issue is the on March 31, 2018, the contract to accept MSW between the Penobscot Energy Recovery Corporation and 187 Maine municipalities and to sell the electricity generated by burning it to Emera Maine (Formerly Bangor-Hydro) will expire. Because the tipping fee charged to municipalities is therefore expected to increase substantially after the contract expiration date, the

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Municipal Review Committee (MRC), the organization representing the 187 municipalities, is developing an alternative plan for MSW disposal.

Greg Louder, and three of his associated in the MRC organization, George Aronson, Kim Guerra, Jessie Pottle, spent about an hour presenting information to the Board and audience and responding to questions about the new proposed MRC plan. The new plan involves a new facility to be built in Hampden, Maine. A formal proposal to the town, with details of the facility, was left with the Town Manager for consideration by the Board and voters. The MRC representatives noted that commitments were needed from towns by May 1, 2016 if the facility is to be ready for opening on April 1, 2018. The Select Board is currently considering an Article for the upcoming Annual Town Business Meeting asking voters whether or not to endorse the MRC Plan.

- **Annual Town Business Meeting Warrant Approval – 2016-2017 Municipal Budget:** It was noted that a final version of the Warrant would be prepared for the February 8, 2016 SB meeting for the Board's respective recommendations on the Articles.

New Business:

- **Public Comment:** There was not any public comment at this time.
- **Jim Isgro and Bob Bennett – RSU#18:** Mr. Isgro, current Chair of the School Committee, noted that he was traveling to all the towns in the RSU #18 district to meet the public officials and school principals. He extended a personal invite to the next governance meeting scheduled for February 4, 2016 at the Messalonskee Middle School from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- **Proposal from Mr. Andy Samoiloff Regarding 13 Lot Subdivision:** The Town Manager noted that he has continuing discussions about the possibility of the owners contributing the 13 lot subdivision to the town. He continued that the offer is a serious one and that the town would be informed soon of the final decision. The final decision would be contingent upon obtaining a favorable appraisal of the sub-division, a figure hopefully close to the town's assessed value for the parcels.
- **Bi-Centennial Recognition – Neil Farrington Recommendation for the Town Meeting Warrant:** Selectperson Neil Farrington asked the Board to consider putting an Article on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant asking to finance a coordinator position for the upcoming Bi-Centennial of China. This will be a budget discussion topic at a later SB meeting. He suggested \$10,000 annually for two years for planning, coordination and possible memorabilia items and to be appropriated from TIF funds.

Manager's Communications (Non-Action Items):

- **Public Comment:** There were questions from the audience about the PPT program..
- **Committees – Meetings/Updates: Thurston Park II 2nd Tuesday of the Month, 7:00 P.M. in the Town Office, Economic and Community Development Committee, As Announced, Time 6:30 P.M., at the Green Bean Restaurant, Transfer Station Committee, selected Tuesdays at 9:00 A.M. in the Town Office.** The respective dates, times, and places of the meetings were announced.
- **TIF Information/Conversations:** The Board agreed to have this item on the agenda for continued conversation.

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- **Budget Committee Deliberations on the 2016-2017 Municipal Budget, Tuesday January 26, 2016 at 6:30 P.M.:** Because the Annual Town Business Meeting Warrant is not final, the Budget Committee meeting scheduled for January 26, 2016 has been postponed until a time after the SB completes their recommendations for the Articles and final acceptance of the Warrant.
- **MEMA and Dam Inspection Report – Branch Mills Flour and Grain Building/ Dam Structure:** MEMA Director Bruce Fitzgerald spoke to the Board and said the building and the dam gates are in such unsafe condition that MEMA plans to issue a dam safety Order to compel the dam owners, Steve and Christine Coombs, to make repairs. Mr. Fitzgerald said the first step in the process is a dam review conference, to be scheduled in late February, when all stakeholders might agree and meet to discuss the issue. The Coombs, who live in New Hampshire, were not able to attend this meeting though sent an e-mail to the Town Manager asking him to present and read a note from them on the issue at hand, a copy of the communication to be attached to these minutes. In the e-mail to the Town Manager, they wrote that they intend to stabilize the mill structure and will apply for the necessary permits. They went on to say that once the mill is stabilized and safe, they will be able to access the dam gates to repair them.

The Coombs also wrote that they blame the State Department of Environmental Protection for the gate problems, if in fact it really is a problem. The dam, they indicated, operated safely for 180 years, until the MDEP responded to a petition by Branch Pond property owners and issued a June 2014 Water Level Order requiring higher water in Branch Pond. The Coombs continue to object to being obligated to change the dam to accommodate the new level. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that he did not have any comment on the water level question, as that was an MDEP issue and separate from MEMA's responsibility for dam safety.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that MEMA engineers think the dam gates and spillways might be too small to allow for safe operation of the dam. A "table-top" exercise is tentatively planned for stakeholders, in March, to plan for actions steps should an emergency situation develop associated with the mill building and dam. The exercise would correspond with the Emergency Action Plan filed with MEMB and the DEP by the Coombs.

- **CRLA Request to Meet:** Jim Hart has asked to meet with the SB at their meeting scheduled for February 8, 2016 to speak about the CRLA request to the town for funds to support the CRLA initiatives.

On a motion by Irene L. Belanger and a second by Selectperson Neil Farrington, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene L. Belanger, Secretary
China Select Board