

Grand Isle Select Board
Minutes of the Meeting for
Thursday, February 24th, 2021 at 6:00pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Jeff Parizo – Chair; AnnaMarie DeMars – Vice-Chair; Ron Bushway; Adam White; Eric Godin

Community Members Present: Melissa Boutin; Carol Egan; Glenda Leake; Jennifer Morway; Sue Lawrence; Josie Leavitt; Rachael Griggs; Esther Blow; Michael Inners; Joe Longo; Shannon Bundy; Cathleen Dubuque; Mitchel Richardson; Diane Cota; Peter Southwick;

Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Ron Bushway wants to discuss a post of Front Porch Forum

II. GUEST OPEN COMMENT

Ron Bushway – Ron says that there was a posting on Front Porch Forum regarding the Select Board Meeting. Ron reads a posting from Front Porch Forum expressing concerns about the town subsidizing a for profit business in the town Annex. The posting indicates that the plan for the Annex would be on the ballot for voters to vote on. Sue Lawrence points out that the decision for the Annex is not before the voters, but before the Select Board.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Fiberworx Appointment: Adam White says that Fiberworx will allow two representatives, but only one voting member. Adam asks both Peter Southwick and Michael Inners, the two candidates for the position if they would be willing to accept a role as a non-voting member on the board. Both agree. ***Adam White moves to appoint Michael Inners as the voting member of the Fiberworx board, and Peter Southwick as the non-voting member. In the event that Mr. Inners cannot attend a meeting, Mr. Southwick will handle the voting. Eric Godin seconds. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*** There is further discussion about the roles of the two representatives, and it is decided that who votes will be determined by the issue at hand and the either representatives expertise in the field.

Town Report/ Town Meeting Issue: Adam White mentions that the Islander had mentioned Grand Isle postponing their vote. Adam White says that there was never any discussion about delaying a vote at the previous Board meeting. Eric Godin says that he feels it would be anti-democratic to delay a vote, saying that there isn't enough time to warn voters of a change in date. Eric goes on to say that he would strongly oppose any efforts to delay a vote in Grand Isle. Jeff says that per the town attorney, the election is good to go forward. Jeff goes on to say that if there is an issue, there are mechanisms to rectify the issue after the vote. The Board agrees that town meeting will be on

Tuesday, March 1st as planned. There is discussion about the availability of the town report, which is the issue in question. The Board agrees that the issue has been settled, and town reports were available in time. It is determined that the town, via town vote had opted not to mail the town reports to everyone, and rather would post an article in the Islander professing the availability of the town report. It is also determined that this didn't happen this year. Jeff goes on to say that the town attorney says to move forward with the vote, but the town may need to ratify the results after the vote. Ron Bushway asks what 'ratify' means. Eric Godin says that ratify generally means signing to certify the results of the vote are accurate. Jeff says that he isn't fully clear on the issue, and Eric says the town attorney should clarify the steps needed further. Adam reads from the state statute, saying that to ratify the election, another town vote will have to be held. Adam agrees to reach out to the town attorney to further clarify the issue.

Turn to Joy Daycare: The Board says that they have read both proposals. AnnaMarie DeMars asks if the town needs to apply for grants to fix the Annex, or if Ms. Egan will apply for the grants. Ms. Egan answers that due to having applied for several other grants, she is not eligible to apply for further grants. Ron asks about water testing, and Ms. Egan responds that she will take care of the water testing. Ron Bushway says that the town will take care of the plowing at the Annex. Adam White asks Jennifer Morway from Planning if the other applicants were aware that they could propose terms. Jennifer answers that one of the other applicants ended up withdrawing her interest before things had gotten to that point. Jennifer says that planning had told applicants to come forward with an offer. Jennifer says that several of the other daycares had concerns about finding workers and demand for childcare in the Islands. Jeff says that another applicant was looking at the property, but pulled out as it was going to be too much on their plate to handle. Adam says that he has gotten emails from residents concerned about the town subsidizing a daycare. AnnaMarie DeMars says that the town needs a daycare. Jeff points out that under the first proposal, Ms. Egan would pay \$25,000 to upgrade the building and not pay rent for two years, noting that this would work out to around \$1,000 per month. Jeff goes on to say that the town is continuing to grow, and the town needs a place for Pre-K education. Jennifer Morway points out that the town has been paying utilities on an empty building, so it is costing taxpayers money to keep it vacant. Adam asks if there were any notices put in the Islander asking if anyone wanted to rent the building. Jennifer says that it was not, but it has been on the Planning Commission agendas for 8 months. There is discussion about what the responsibilities of the previous tenant were. There is a question asked about whether Turn to Joy will operate as a nonprofit. Carol Egan answers now. Diane Cota asks if the building is structurally sound, and who would be responsible for the updates. Adam says that the answers to the second question depends on which proposal is accepted. Adam goes on to say that he feels anything exterior would fall to the town, and indoors would have to be discussed on a case-by-case basis. There is vigorous discussion about whether the proposals constitute a subsidy, which several residents saying they feel it is a subsidy and shouldn't be done, while others speak in favor of the proposal. Eric Godin says that tonight's meeting is to choose a proposal, and at that point, the town attorney

will work with Ms. Egan's attorney to draft a lease proposal, which would then be available to use. Ron Bushway says that based on his calculations, proposal 1 would be more fiscally viable for the town. **Ron Bushway moves to accept proposal 1 from Turn to Joy Daycare, per advice of the town attorney. Jeff Parizo seconds. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.**

Lister's Appointment: Sue Lawrence says that the Lister's advertised the open Lister position in the Islander for 3 weeks, and received one inquiry and one letter of interest. Sue says that the inquiry was withdrawn, as the applicant thought it would be too much work. Sue says that the other applicant was Diane Cota, who has spent time talking to the Listers to find out about the position. Sue talks about the many different aspects of the Lister's position, including training and knowledge required to do the job. **Adam White moves to accept the Lister's recommendation to appoint Diane Cota to fill the empty Lister term that ends town meeting day 2023. Eric Godin seconds.** Diane Cota asks what the pay will be. It is determined that the pay scale is up to the Lister's office. **Jeff calls the vote, which passes with 4 ayes, with Jeff Parizo voting nay.**

IV. ADJOURNMENT

AnnaMarie DeMars moves to adjourn the meeting at 7:37pm. Adam White seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote which passes unanimously.