

Stockton Springs Select Board Minutes

February 10, 2025

Attendees:

Select Board Members Present	Elizabeth Lenharr (Liz Lenharr) Marsha Shute Betsy Bradley John Bellino – Interim Town Manager
Select Board Members Absent	
Recording Secretary	Sarah Hardy
Community members	Approximately 14 community members were in attendance for some or all of the meeting. Speaker names were captured in the notes as best as possible. No attendance list was captured.

Yellow Highlight indicates NEW or not-yet-completed action items.

Green Highlight indicates COMPLETED action items.

Blue Highlight indicates incomplete notes, based on in-person note taking where something was missed. May need to go to tape backup.

#	Agenda	Notes
1.	Roll Call: Call to Order	Marsha Shute called meeting to order 8:10 am roll call – see attendance above
2.	Adjustments to the Agenda	Looking for approval of the previous meeting minutes 1/27/25, approve treasurers report and warrants.
	Approval of Minutes	1/27/25 – Marsha made a motion to accept, Liz seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
	Treasurers report	Select board reviewed document provided by John. Betsy offered to read what is in the accounts, no one requested that. Q: Betsy – question on the fire house replacement account – the \$140,000 for the purchase for the property, does it need to come back out and into the general fund? A: John mentioned keeping the money where it is since another station will have to be purchased at some point. Vern – there an account where donations “fire house building account”. He thinks the \$140,000 should go there.

		<p>This needs to be separate from fire house equipment or truck fund. So John will make sure the money is placed in the account.</p> <p>Q: Margaret Laing – what happened with the house sale? A: Marsha – the owner changed his mind. Q: Margaret - are there any other properties A: Betsy and Vern – there are requirements about where it can be placed, the railroad track is a consideration (can't be on the far side of the tracks), access, size and level of the land are also a factor.. Q: Jerry Antoon – he suggests building on the underutilized property of the parking lot adjacent to the town office. A: Vern indicated that there is 10 feet of fill, with lots of garbage like stumps, beaver dam, a bridge under that lot and is not suitable. It also may not be big enough for the size of the building needed.</p> <p>Till a property is identified, the biggest risk of not having a bigger building is if OSHA regulations change they won't be able to use the current building and that essentially will shut down our emergency services.</p> <p>Marsha makes a motion to accept the Treasurers report as of 2/10/2025. Liz seconded, all voted in favor.</p>
	Accounts payable warrant #49	<p>The select board reviewed the document provided by John.</p> <p>Marsha motions to approve the accounts payable warrant #49, Liz seconded, the board approved unanimously.</p>
3.	Remaining ARPA Funds	<p>We have about 18 months to spend them but wanted to acknowledge that explicitly now that the sale for Tally HO is off. Need to determine how to use the \$.</p> <p>Betsy – asked for reminder, if we pay off the ambulance bond, do we still pay the interest (John to take as action item to find out)? If it's no help to pay off the ambulance early, should we just save the \$82,000 and earn interest in it while we have it. John to confirm with Tim Pease.</p>
4.	Tax Acquired Properties	<p>John couldn't find documents on the policy for real estate sales via an agent.</p> <p>Betsy – mentioned that Mac had gotten the documents from Bangor, so they should be somewhere, if he can't find them to reach out to Bangor Action for John to dig up the documentation</p> <p>It was noted that some of the properties have “problems” like they are land locked. Some are in foreclosure, some are town properties, some were gifted. The board would like to review the list at a future meeting. Action, add to future agenda.</p>

5.	Personnel Policy Review	<p>John thought this might take a meeting or two before all the reviews are done. Many changes have been made at the state level that should be included in the town's policies, for example FMLA.</p> <p>Q: Betsy – how does the town handle pay increases. Would like to create a policy – is it merit, cost of living etc.</p> <p>John did find a spreadsheet of pay “steps”, but it is out of date</p> <p>Betsy – that step sheet has not been brought before the board for a while, thinks it should go through the select board if it's going to be reinstated. Action item review pay “steps” and pay increase policies as part of the personnel review.</p>
6.	Solar Panels at Town Garage	<p>John mentioned the clerk has the info needed for the special town meeting on the 24th. John still hasn't been able to get ahold of Sundog Solar.</p> <p>Q: Diane – can that wait for a regular town meeting to negotiate the purchase?</p> <p>A: Betsy/Linda Meadows – we must notify the solar company 90 days in advance of the May 7 anniversary of the contract. The way Linda reads the contract, we must buy it on the anniversary, so the meeting is necessary to approve it or not. Linda recommends we see if we can approve it at the town meeting and then see if they will take payment after the regular meeting, like in July.</p> <p>Betsy – suggests we use unassigned funds for the purchase. Need to have this handled for the warrant by Thursday. Since it's been hard for John to reach the contact, Linda suggested adding an “up to” amount in the warrant.</p> <p>Q: Angie – is there any harm in not doing this for another year? So that we're not in a rush.</p> <p>A: Betsy – we lose opportunity to save money for another year, we've already lost one year because we could have done this last year. Also, Betsy mentioned, because the town meeting comes after the anniversary, we'd remain in this timing predicament each year. Even if we waited till the town meeting to approve it, we still need a special meeting to allocate funds.</p> <p>John indicated that since we know the max, we can proceed with the warrant for February 24th special town meeting.</p> <p>Angie raised her concern that we've had more special town meetings than normal, she also noted that the June meeting time is because we missed out on engaging with residents that may be away from town for the winter when the town meetings used to be in March.</p>

		<p>Noted by Marsha that the timing of the special town meeting will also be a select board meeting (in the evening). Also, there are other topics on the agenda for the town meeting than this purchase.</p>
7.	Public Comment – any topic	<p>Public: Q: Susan Henkel – Marsha has been elected and will be back on select board. She asked Marsha, what does it mean that the “town is moving in a new direction”. She also asked if the new manager will be salaried? A: Marsha – she is bound by privacy from previous executive sessions but could speak to the future. The board wants to increase transparency, in the past the board hasn’t gotten all of the information or sometimes any information about issues/topics that need to be considered. When they don’t know something, they can’t do their job properly and the town crucifies them. A new town manager will need to do that.</p> <p>Q: Keith – is the “new direction” just about how the town manager and select board work together? It doesn’t necessarily have to do with how the town is acting, policies or activities of the town. A: Marsha – it has to do with the relationship between town manager and select board. Q: Susan Henkel – Will the interviews/job description will emphasize that? A: Betsy said that even with the interviews with interim town managers, they have stressed budget handling, funding, not missing out on funds (like grants)</p> <p>John indicated that he sees a tremendous opportunity for economic growth. This is a beautiful village that could do more. If there was the right person seeking grants, focusing on economic growth, it would positively impact on the town peoples’ taxes because there will be other revenue sources.</p> <p>Q: Pat Curley – is concerned that the town meeting to increase the number of select members to 5, will change the nature of our town governing. There needs to be a discussion that more people can take part in (therefore should be in the June meeting). A: Betsy – but there has been a lot of discussion about this change at meetings, and while we value all of our town residents we cannot wait.</p> <p>Q: Pat Curley – noted that the minutes from meetings that are approved haven’t been posted so not everyone knows what’s been discussed. Q: Betsy – she mentioned that not all meeting minutes were left when the previous permanent town manager departed. Pat and Betsy – each expressed in a frustrated discussion about the meeting notes, and how they were kept or not kept previously. There</p>

	<p>was discussion about posting meeting recordings, though it was noted these are not required by law to be posted.</p> <p>Sarah Hardy - gave her opinion about how recordings aren't searchable and are not user friendly to listen to for a specific topic (recordings can be hours long), vs written notes.</p> <p>Q: Keith – what is the law? A: Betsy – the requirement is only that there is a meeting. No agenda required to be published. Notes only need to include the motions and the voted results of the motions.</p> <p>Q: Susan Henkel – when is the town buying a laptop so Sarah Hardy doesn't have to use her personal computer? A: John – he is working on it.</p> <p>John – wanted to clarify going to a 5 person select board doesn't change the nature of government or how it works. It just gives more people a voice in government.</p> <p>Q: Keith – what is the plan for the special town meeting related to the 5 people A: John – if we waited till June, we'd have to wait a whole year before being able to vote on 5 members. By including it in February 24 special town meeting, we can vote in June of this year.</p> <p>Q: Pat Curley – what are the term limits going to be? Will three select board members all expire at the same time? A: John – the end dates will be staggered.</p> <p>Betsy – one of the people who interviewed that for town manager suggested a methodology where the town manager would tell the chair and that person would tell all the other members, with only 3 people that is improper because a conversation between two members equals a quorum.</p> <p>Linda Meadows – asked about the comprehensive plan. She wants to make sure that this is kept on the radar. Q: John – how old is the plan A – from 2002</p> <p>Betsy mentioned that new committee for comprehensive plan and community benefit agreement were recently raised by the select board and there are a few people who have expressed interest in those.</p> <p>Q: Jerry Altoon – related the remaining AARPA funds, he thought that those would expire on December 31st – now that Tally Ho is not going through, is that an issue?</p>
--	--

A: Betsy – because we had contracts in place for all of the funds, we are ok (was real estate, broadband and ambulance).
Q: Jerry – so it’s an “or” on how the money is used (vs and “and”) so we can shift it from one purpose to another?
A: Yes correct
Q: Jerry – is the new ambulance online now?
A: Vern Thompson – should be by the end of February. Specific date could be received from Amy Drinkwater

Select Board:

Liz Lenharr– the harbor committee met with the Penobscot Mercury Remediation trust representatives (Laura and Cynthia) in the previous week. The folks from the trusts learned a bit about the town, Skeet showed them the harbor. Hopefully Stockton will be applying for funds that were set aside for affected communities. Next steps are the representatives will join a town meeting or a select meeting to give a presentation on the polluted area and what they are doing about it (capping, remediation etc.). They will also explain the financial aspects and help lead us through the funding process.

Skeet mentioned that the previous town manager did not pursue funds when it was presented to him.

Q: Susan Henkel – is this the first time Liz had spoken to these folks – or was it at the meeting in prospect?
A: Liz – she had attended a meeting in Prospect as a private citizen. Mac was supposed to attend but did not. Based on what she learned at that meeting, she was able to bring them back to the town.

Skeet – when he spoke to Laura, he asked if the funds can be used at the harbor rather than distributing it across the town. Laura indicated that that is preferable because we’d be more successful in getting funding if we focused our request on shoreline activities - especially accentuating the park. Skeets opinion is that folks that don’t use the harbor shouldn’t have to pay for its upkeep or enhancement and if we can get some funds like this then we could do a lot more without impacting the towns budget.

Q: Diane – has there been a decision on contractors for the docks? Who decides on that? Because the deadline has passed.
A: John – he has the 2 sealed bids.
There was discussion about who makes decisions on the selection.

Skeet – said that the harbor committee would not make the decision but could give a recommendation. Both companies that showed up at the required meeting were good candidates. There is hope that the builder will bring their own crane to just put them right in when they are

done. There is concern about timing and getting this in place before boats begin using the harbor, the committee is hoping that they won't have to wait till July. Asks that we discuss the bids asap so we can get on the builder's schedule. (see below for continuation under Town Manager Update)

Correspondence: Betsy mentioned the select board received a letter from Bonita Brooks asking for help working on the parks. Also hoping to get some grant money and looking for help.

George mentioned if he could get two more people with tractors to help it would be great – Vern volunteered.

Town Manager/Including Routine Updates:

John – is beginning to work with department heads to begin working on the budget.

He is going to get the newsletter published again, last one in December

There are 12 applicants for town manager, there is another week on that posting. Many people with municipal experience but no previous town managers

Also received several applicants for the deputy harbor master.

Q: Margaret – are the town manager candidates local?

A: John – we are taking applications from Indeed but thinks some are near – one from Surry.

Q: Skeet - has Dave Estes's salary issues been resolved?

John – He is paid by stipend and broken down into 12 monthly payments. It will be discussed in today's executive session.

Picking back up the issue of the town docks:

John brought down the bids for the docks and opened the sealed envelopes. They are:

Custom floats services inc. – 7 8'X20' walkway float, 3 6'3" finger floats. The bid packet includes pictures, their bid was lump sum \$102,146 payable via construction dept \$34,000, first payment \$34,000 and final payment upon completion \$34,146. Procurement, construction and installation included.

Prock Marine Company - 7 8'X20' walkway float, 3 6'3' X 20'finger floats. Lump sum is \$99,543, there was no breakdown mentioned. Also included pictures. Procurement, construction and delivery included.

Q: Liz do they include installation?

A: Betsy reading from the bids, it seems that both includes installation, though the wording is different. Custom floats mentions that they can complete the project within 120 days of the award of the contract. Prock – will begin working on the project as soon as they receive award, they included certificate of liability insurance, they indicated they would not subcontract.

(note the points mentioned above or below about the dock bids are not a comprehensive list of services/guarantees/qualifications in the bids, it is a capture of many of the statement read allowed in the meeting)

Keith – do they both have the same warranty?

(this was not answered)

During the investigation of the documents – it was discovered that a check was included in the Custom Floats bid. Prock didn't send a check. John thought the RFP mentioned that each bid should include a bid guarantee of 5%. A bid guarantee serves as a discount on the total price.

Q: Liz - Who built the previous floats?

A: Skeet - Custom floats built some, George and public works build some and harbor committee built some. They have held up well, they have held up about 2X of life expectancy. Mentioned that the straight dock actually serves as a wave block for the rest of the docks. Vern and Skeet mentioned how the winds have changed in recent times. The regular maintenance done on the floats has extended their life.

Skeet reviewed the documents and asked if he can get feedback from the harbor committee. It was noted if they did that then there would be a two-week delay in making the decision (would be at next meeting) which could result in a delay in delivery of the docks. Skeet left to make some calls.

He came back and said that the committee said to go with the lower bid because they feel both companies are good and either would be fine.

Discussion of how to pay for the docks:

John noted that \$36,000 is in a harbor committee account. This money is to act as the matching funds. Because this is to be paid for via matching funds (50% town, 50% harbor committee) so more will have to be identified (Skeet thought they have the money).

There was some discussion about harbor financials and budget.

Referring to the Town's budget. Diane found that \$52,393 was included

in the budget, but the income to pay for that comes from the mooring fees (not taxes).

John found there is an extra \$8,000 in the account for floats and docks that haven't been spent yet so we are at \$44,000. Skeet mentioned that the harbor committee only expected 9 finger docks so maybe the difference in cost is the extra finger dock? However, one extra doc means more dingy space and more revenue coming in. If necessary we could remove one dock to save money.

Diane suggests that we move forward and talk to Amber to figure out the funding combination.

Q: Diane – if we have to put the old docks in the water temporarily is there any extra expense to then pull those out and replace with new ones?

A: Skeet – no, it should be negligible because it's done by volunteers, if there's cost, he'll cover it.

Reviewing of the budget line items, there is a grant writer \$5500, which may not have been fully paid out (only 85.39 has been paid out from what John can see – it may be for the ad for the deputy harbor master). It will be explored if there are moneys available from that account.

Q: Keith – can we accept the bid pending procurement of fees?

A: Diane thought we could definitely find the funds.

John found a discrepancy – there is a line item to be funded by a grant that was never funded, but about \$5,000 was paid out of that fund. This may be related to the grant writer line item above.

There is a proposal from the board: if there is any discrepancy in the funding formula the suggestion is to take it from the unassigned fund then repay it from the new budget in June.

Some calculations were done to really figure out what money we have vs what we need:

In the harbor account there is \$36755.62, there is \$8,000 in docks account, \$5,107.30 from the bid guarantee. this is \$49,862.92. If we multiply by 2 to account for the matching funds, the total is \$99725.84. This leaves a \$2420.16 shortfall gap with \$1210 due from the town and \$1210 from the harbor committee in matching.

It is believed that the shortfall can be found or pulled from the unassigned fund without replenishment from the budget.

Betsy made a motion to award the bid for the Stockton Springs pier and harbor restoration to Custom Floats Services Inc. for lump sum price of \$102,146. Marsha seconded, all in favor.

		<p>Betsy made a motion to add to the warrant for the special town meeting on the 24, to add an article to pull up to \$8,000 from the unassigned fund. Seconded by Marsha and all in favor.</p> <p>Betsy made a motion to approve the moving of 36755.62 from the harbor dock reserve account. Marsha seconded, all in favor.</p>
8	Approve Meeting Minutes	<p>12/23/24 and 1/27/2024 await approval. The notes from 12/23 have not been reviewed yet because they were delivered too close to meeting time. 12/23/24 Will be brought forth for approval at the next meeting.</p> <p>Marsha made a motion to approve 1/27/2024 meeting minutes. Seconded by Liz, voted unanimously for approval.</p>
9.	Executive session pursuant to 1MRSA ss 405(6)(A) Personnel Matters	<p>Motion from Marsha to move into executive session pursuant to 1MRSA ss 405(6)(A) Personnel Matters at 10:35am. Seconded by Liz, voted all in favor.</p> <p>Exited executive session at 12pm</p>
10.	Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 12:07pm

Open Action item list:

Date raised	Action	Assignment	Status
1/13/25	<p>Regarding the buy-out of the existing solar panels on the town garage. Per Linda Meadows, who has examined the contract and raised her findings in public comment, if we are to initiate the purchase we must indicate our intent before February 7, 2025, or we will have to wait another year.</p> <p>a. The select board decided to initiate the negotiations.</p> <p>b. Per Betsy – it would have to be raised as a budget item on the budget, thinks we should initiate the negotiations. No motion is needed</p> <p>c. Skeet – is this sundog solar? Danny Piper (gave his number to Loren) is a neighbor and thinks they’d work with the town, and thinks he’d be sure to come to a good deal.</p>	a. John Bellino	<p>In process, see notes from 1/27/25 meeting notes.</p> <p>John to get final numbers in time to be included on the warrant for 2/24/25 special town meeting.</p>
1/13/25	<p>In public comment Tom Moore mentioned an emergency communication antenna which hasn’t been mounted since the new roof. It couldn’t be reattached because it would require puncture of the new roof. Betsy asked for the paperwork on what needs to be done, it had previously been provided to Mac. Tom will provide the estimate. The company is Atlantic Communications.</p> <p>a. Select board to decide on how to handle the antennae installation</p> <p>Betsy updated that Loren felt strongly that the antennae get moved off the town and onto the Emergency building.</p> <p>Dianne mentioned Tom Moore did have some concerns about the location and the facilities available at each location.</p> <p>b. Action as of 2/10/25: John to revisit this topic with Tom Moore. Determine which location is optimal. We will need to consider costs of installation and method of installation for each location. Suggest including Vern in discussion with Tom since they seem to have different opinions.</p>	<p>a. Betsy Bradley</p> <p>b. John Bellino</p>	<p>In process, see notes from the 1/27/25 meeting.</p> <p>Updated on 2/10/25</p>
1/20/25	<p>Research new high-speed internet for Town facilities – town office, town garage, harbor master building</p>	John Bellino	Assigned to new interim town manager in

			1/27/25 meeting In process as of 2/10/25
1/20/25	<p>Create the warrant for a 5 member select board for the next town meeting</p> <p>Must be done by Thursday, per Dianne warrant will be ready for signatures Wednesday afternoon.</p>	John Bellino	In process, discussed next steps in 1/27/25 meeting. Due Thursday, in process as of 2/10.
1/27/25	<p>Create warrants and plan for June town meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Broadband, next phase (this will be June meeting) 	Loren Cole or new Interim town manager John Bellino	Pending
2/10/25	<p>Since the cancelation of Tally Ho purchase, the \$140,000 needs to be placed in the correct firehouse building account (separate from the fire station equipment account)</p>	John Bellino	Pending
2/10/2025	<p>Because of the cancelation of the Tally Ho purchase, can we use the ARPA funds for the ambulance?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there any benefit of paying off the bond early or does it make more sense to leave the ARPA money (\$82,000) in an interest-bearing account and accumulate interest? Confirm with Tim Pease. 	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	<p>In March, when the bond money for the ambulance comes in, add an item on the agenda to receive the bond money.</p>	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	<p>Find the policy documents related to the new state law requiring towns to engage real estate agents for the sale of town owned properties. Mac had obtained the policy drafted by Bangor's town manager. If they can't be found, reach out to Bangor for them again.</p>	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	<p>Bring the list of properties (tax forfeiture, gifted, town-owned) to be sold by the town for review at a future select board meeting.</p>	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	<p>Action item review pay "steps" and pay increase policies as part of the personnel review.</p>	John Bellino	

2/10/2025	Meeting Minutes from 12/23/24 Will be brought forth for approval at the next meeting. Make sure all approved minutes are on the town website.	John Bellino	
-----------	--	--------------	--

Completed Action items:

Date raised	Action	Assignment	Status
1/20/25	Notify David Estes about his renewed contract for Harbor Master	Loren Cole	Per Skeet, David was contacted and accepted the position. Complete 1/27/25 meeting.
1/20/25	Place ad for Assistant Harbor Master	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25
1/20/25	Place ad for Town Manager	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25
1/20/25	Contact Rich Cromwell for assistance on hiring Town Manager	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25
1/20/25	Contact Tim Pease (town lawyer) for next steps in acquiring funds and paying for the ambulance approved at the 12/30/24 town meeting Update 2/10/25 - Complete and the application has been submitted. Awaiting final approval, committal from the bond. Expect the bond in March, leave this on action item to receive the bond money in the second march meeting.	John Bellino	discussed next steps in 1/27/25 meeting Complete, on 2/10/25 meeting.
1/27/25	Ambulance Bond – to be submitted before 2/5/25 deadline	John Bellino	Complete, updated in 2/10/25 meeting
1/27/25	Create warrants and plan for special town meeting or June town meeting: 1. Buyout of solar panels on town garage, (special town meeting) 2. Create a 5 person select board (special town meeting)	John Bellino	Warrants and Plan completed for Solar Panel Buyout and 5-person

			board in special town meeting. Closed on 2/10 meeting
--	--	--	---