

**Mason's Island Fire District Meeting**  
**January 12, 2021 – 5:30 PM**  
**Zoom Teleconference**

This will be a virtual meeting conducted on Zoom with public access provided through live streaming on the MIFD Facebook page. This is a public page that can be accessed with or without a Facebook account using the following link: [https://www.facebook.com/Masons-Island-Fire-District-10812531422221/?view\\_public\\_for=10812531422221](https://www.facebook.com/Masons-Island-Fire-District-10812531422221/?view_public_for=10812531422221)

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes
3. Approval/Correction of Previous Minutes
  - a. Motion to approve the minutes from December 8, 2020.
4. President's Report – Ethan Tower
  - a. Emergency Calls – 3 for December; 21 for the fiscal year.
  - b. Traffic Counters – MIPOA has offered them to MIFD.
5. Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor
6. Unfinished Business
  - a. Shore Line Erosion – Kristin Foster
  - b. Pond Committee – Chris Ficke / Martha Ficke
  - c. Tick Tax – Jean Anderson / John Parry
    - i. Deferred until February.
  - d. Committee on Traffic Volume – John Parry
    - i. Report posted for comment. Hearing in April.
  - e. Traffic Control – Ethan Tower
    - i. Guardhouse windows have been improved.
  - f. Vehicle Stickers – Ethan Tower
    - i. Green on white, numbered, semi-permanent (not static-cling).
  - g. Drainage – Ethan Tower
    - i. Japanese Barberry behind Anderson's house on Money Point.
  - h. Roads Committee – Tom Flaherty
  - i. Nominating Committee – Kristin Foster / Scott Parry
  - j. Appointments – Ethan Tower
    - i. Traffic Control: TBD
7. New Business
  - a. Request for "Slow/Caution" sign for intersection of Anchor Lane, Nauyaug Point, and Nauyaug North – Ethan Tower
  - b. Drainage on Yacht Club Rd – Kristin Foster
8. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 9 at 5:30PM
9. Adjourn

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
STONINGTON, CT  
21 JAN 11 PM 2:50  
CYNTHIA LADWIG  
TOWN CLERK

**Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting  
Masons Island Yacht Club  
December 8, 2020  
Minutes of Meeting**

The meeting was held virtually on Zoom. The Agenda filed with the Town of Stonington included instructions for the public to access live streaming of the meeting on MIFD's Facebook page. This is a public page that can be accessed with or without a Facebook account using the following link: [https://www.facebook.com/Masons-Island-Fire-District-10812531422221/?view\\_public\\_for=10812531422221](https://www.facebook.com/Masons-Island-Fire-District-10812531422221/?view_public_for=10812531422221)

**Attending:** Ethan Tower, David Krupp, Bill Taylor, John Parry, Kristin Foster, Tom Flaherty, Lee Hisle, Scott Parry and Tom Cooke. Rufus Allyn and Alex Ellison were not in attendance. Jean Anderson, Mary McAuley, and Chris Ficke also participated in the meeting. President Ethan Tower called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. A quorum was present.

**Clerk's Report:** Tom Cooke presented draft minutes of the November 10, 2020 with corrections made by Ethan Tower. M/S/P approving the minutes as corrected. A copy of the corrected minutes is attached.

**President's Report – Ethan Tower:** Emergency Calls – Ethan reported that there was 1 call in November bringing the yearly total to 18.

**Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor:** Bill reported that the receipt of additional tax income put MIFD \$1,136 over budget. \$2,600 was spent on clearing trees and brush since the last meeting bringing the total to \$6,175. He added that the Fickes representing the Pond Committee have approved payment to SOLitude for its survey of the pond. \$13,800 currently in reserves will be moved into the financial statements. MIFD currently has \$90,000 in operating reserves.

**Unfinished Business**

- **Tick Tax:** Mary McAuley and Jean Anderson were present to discuss the possibility of a tick tax and to provide additional information about the program. Jean noted that the transition to a tick tax could not occur for 2021 and that the program therefore would continue to be managed in the same manner as past years.

The Board discussed whether a MIFD tick tax would be applied only to residential properties, and whether the tax could be limited to a subset of taxpayers. It was noted

that some non-residential properties currently participate in the program. It also discussed the possibility of obtaining competitive bids from service providers in the future.

Mary McAuley provided information on the "4-Poster Program" which is designed to kill ticks on deer's ears, heads, necks, and shoulders. She noted that Masons Island was issued the first and only permit from CT DEP in 2008 ever issued for a 4-Poster Program. Studies have shown the program to be highly effective in certain environments such as islands and was an important part of the overall approach to tick management. A discussion ensued concerning the effectiveness of organic insecticide products. Mary also discussed the importance of herd management as part of the program, noting that there has been an increase in the deer population over the past two years.

Mary also discussed the importance of resident education as part of the overall program, advising residents of the importance of pet treatment, yard waste management and checking for ticks. She stated that human lyme disease was a major issue prior to the implementation of the program in 2008, adding that there was only once instance of human lyme disease in 2012 after the program had been running for some time. There have been 3 to 4 cases per year in the past couple of years (last year there were 4 cases with 3 occurring in one family).

In further discussion of the 4-Poster Program, Mary explained that scientists have told her that Masons Island could expect an increase in lyme cases if the program were discontinued. She added that if the program is discontinued Masons Island will not be able to get another permit.

Discussion ensued about how to develop a budget for the tick tax which included a suggestion that an estimate based on \$250 per property might be reasonable. The Board discussed possible communications with and to residents and Jean recommended in-person meetings.

- **Shoreline Erosion – Kristin Foster:** Kristin reported that the number of people participating on the Shoreline Committee is growing and currently includes Kristin, Jim McAuley, Bill Pryor, Rufus Allyn, Rob Christian, Christie Williams, Cate Moffett, Julia Parry, Lou Allyn, and Kit Hartford. Kristin discussed the possibility of establishing the Committee as a 501(c)(3) organization which would potentially increase the likelihood of obtaining gifts and grants to cover remediation costs.

Kristin reported that by her own measurement, 3 feet of ground was lost on Chippechaug Trail as a result of the November 30 storm. She noted that DEEP would be supportive of “upland” solutions such as plants to protect against erosion and raised berms. More complicated and expensive options include steps to redevelop the marshland. Existing complications include multiple ownership of the land involved and the reality that the land in question is mostly sand and not glacier material.

Next steps include engaging an engineering firm. The goal is to have recommendations for the annual meeting in May. Discussion ensued about the role of the Town of Stonington, which has a Climate Change Task Force. A Declaration of Emergency by the Town would open up possible access to FEMA funding. The Town also has a hazard mitigation plan which was created in 2016 and updated in 2017. While the causeway to Masons Island may be included it is a low priority. Costs for mitigation could exceed \$100,000.

- **Pond Committee:** Chris Ficke stated that the north end of the pond has considerable amounts of silt and vegetation and that one solution would be to dredge that area, going 30 to 40 feet into the pond. He estimates that to dredge this section of the pond would cost \$100,000. This appears to be the best option and the approach would be to dredge first and then to install a “bubbler” system. A discussion ensued concerning the effectiveness of installing the “bubbler” system without dredging, and Chris stated that the information available suggests that the system would not make a meaningful difference. Further discussion ensued concerning the options for funding the dredging project. Chris recommends discontinuing the algicide program to cover the costs of the bubbler. The Board discussed the advantages of MIPOA taking ownership of the pond for project funding purposes. Chris noted that the cost of liability insurance bourn by the owner is likely a significant expense. Other ownership and potential funding options, such as the creation of a special tax district for the pond, were considered by the Board. No action was taken on this item at the meeting.
- **Committee on Traffic Volume:** John Parry reported that no further comments have been received on the report posted on the website, and that no action was required of the committee at this point. Ethan Tower raised the possibility of having a Public Hearing on the plan in April, and John suggested that it might be combined with a hearing on the proposed tick tax.
- **Traffic Control Plan:** Ethan reviewed with most recent version in the plan which addressed recommendations made by members of the Board. Final comments and

recommendations included standardizing the appearance of the signs as much as possible, putting traffic signs on the right side of the road. Changes would be funded through the roads budget. Bill Taylor moved approval of the Plan and David Krupp seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ethan stated that he would work with Rufus on implementation, including some of the sign placement issues.

- **Vehicle Stickers**: Ethan noted that the policy has been updated by MIPOA. Ethan recommended moving to green stickers to replace the red stickers currently in use. Discussion ensued concerning the color, the need for an effective background color, and whether to number the stickers. No official Board action was taken.
- **Nominating Committee**: Three non-board positions on the Nominating Committee need to be filled. A goal was set to finalize the members of the committee by the next meeting in January.

### **New Business**

There was no new business for the Board.

**MIFD Meeting Calendar**: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 12 (correcting the agenda which stated the meeting would take place on January 9).

Meeting Adjourned – 7:33 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Cooke

**Mason's Island Fire District BOD Meeting**  
**Masons Island Yacht Club**  
**November 10, 2020 – 5:30 PM**  
**Mason's Island Yacht Club**  
**7 Yacht Club Road, Mystic**

**Attending:** Ethan Tower, David Krupp, Bill Taylor, John Parry, Tom Flaherty, Scott Parry, Lee Hisle, and Tom Cooke. Kristin Foster, Rufus Allyn, and Alex Ellison were not in attendance. President Ethan Tower called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. A quorum was present.

**Clerk's Report:** John Parry made a correction to the October 13, 2020 minutes in Unfinished Business, Section d. Report of the Committee on Traffic Volume. M/S/P approving the minutes as corrected.

**President's Report – Ethan Tower:** Emergency Calls – Ethan reported that there were 5 EMS calls for October, including two non-residential calls, for a total of 17 this year.

**Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor:** Bill reviewed parts of MIFD's 2020-2021 Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual report as of November 5, 2020, a copy of which is attached. A copy of MIFD's Balance Sheet as of November 5, 2020 was also provided and is attached.

Bill reported that the first of 6 payments for plowing, each in the amount of \$2,662, has been made. Bill also reported that all signposts are now in at a cost of \$13,197, exceeding the sign budget of \$12,000. Lee Hisle noted that the original proposal was based on street names on two sides of the post and that there is an upcharge for additional street names. In addition, Lee noted that the additional signs for Plover and Osprey increased costs, and that the billed amount was legitimate.

Bill added that additional tax dollars have been received. He has not received delinquency reports from the Town of Stonington. The reports should be secured by Alex Ellison.

A total of \$22,238 has been paid for guard duty out of a budget of \$34,000. This does not leave sufficient funds for seven-days-a-week guard duty in May and June of 2021, which is projected to cost \$13,500. A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of obtaining competitive bids for the work.

### Unfinished Business

- a. **Shoreline Erosion – Kristin Foster**: Full discussion of the item was deferred until December. A brief discussion was held about flooding in Watch Hill and a grant received to assist with the problem.
- b. **Report of the Committee on Traffic Volume – John Parry**: The report had been posted on the MIPOA/MIFD website for comment and John reported receiving 6 comments, all of them favorable. He noted that the comments contained two questions about enforcement. Discussion ensued concerning options for traffic enforcement and the potential role of the Stonington Police Department.
- c. **Contract with Mystic Fire Department – Scott Parry/John Parry**: John Parry reported that MIFD received a letter from the Mystic Fire Department (“MFD”) stating that the contract was in effect until 2024 and that MFD would submit cost adjustments. John noted that the contract includes a cap on fees of \$48,000. The letter also indicated that MFD would submit a proposal to the MIFD in April or May of 2021.
- d. **Pond Report**: No representatives of the Pond Committee were available for comment on this item. Ethan noted that surveyors were observed at the pond. A discussion ensued about the possible sale of the pond to MIPOA, which is awaiting the results of the survey and long-term estimates of the maintenance costs. ~~apparently not a priority issue at this time.~~
- e. **Traffic Control Plan for 2021 – Ethan Tower**: Ethan presented a revised Traffic Control Plan for 2021, a copy of which is attached. The Plan was reviewed with the Board and suggestions were made concerning sign wording, potential improvements to the Guardhouse, the elimination of some existing signs and the replacement and improvement of others, including signs for Enders Island. Ethan offered to send web links for signage options and asked that any further thoughts on the plan be forwarded to him.
- f. **MIPOA Stickers – Ethan Tower**: Ethan stated that MIPOA has yet to finish the policy and that he would send it once received.
- g. **Tick Tax – Jean Anderson/John Parry**: This item was deferred to December. There was a brief discussion about holding a Public Hearing to discuss proposals to include the tick tax in MIFD taxes and the potential for receiving bids from potential service providers.

- h. **Drainage – Ethan Tower:** The Board discussed potential options for removal of the Japanese Barberry behind the Anderson’s house on Money Point. With respect to erosion in front of the Reichart residence on Chippechaug, ~~a potential solution is to provide curbing~~ will be added to help prevent erosion.
- i. **Appointments – Ethan Tower:** Ethan continues to look for volunteers for a Safety & Security Committee.

### **New Business**

- a. **Nominating Committee – Ethan Tower:** The Board discussed potential members of the Nominating Committee for open positions, noting that Kristin Foster and Lee Hisle have served on the committee in the past. Scott Parry stated that he was willing to serve on the committee. Ethan will ask Kristin if she is also willing to serve. Members of the Board noted that the committee also requires three other residents who do not serve on the Board. A final report from the Committee is needed by May 1<sup>st</sup> at the latest.
- b. **Roads – Tom Flaherty:** Tom discussed his project to update information on the quality of the roads on Mason’s Island. The Board discussed sources of information, including information available from Rufus Allyn and Lydia Herd (which include sheets with detailed information about the roads). The Board noted that the roads were significantly improved by the fire hydrant installation. A discussion ensued concerning the need to update the long-term capital plan.

Meeting adjourned – 6:36 pm

**MIFD Meeting Calendar:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8 at 5:30 PM Club.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:33 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Cooke