

Masons Island Fire District Meeting
October 19, 2021 – 5:30 PM
Masons Island Yacht Club

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes
3. Approval/Correction of Previous Minutes
 - a. Motion to approve the minutes from September 14, 2021.
4. President's Report – Ethan Tower
 - a. Emergency Calls – 6 for September; 21 for the fiscal year.
 - b. Appointments
 - i. Traffic Control: Scott Parry
 - ii. Roads Committee: Ethan Tower
5. Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Tick Committee – Jean Anderson
 - b. Shoreline Protection Committee – Kristin Foster
 - c. Traffic Control – Ethan Tower
 - i. See traffic control reports for 2020 and 2021
 - d. Roads Committee – Ethan Tower
 - e. Nominating Committee – Scott Parry / Kristin Foster
7. Unfinished Business
8. New Business
 - a. Snowstorm Letter – stakes, mailbox damage, contact person (Rufus)
 - b. Meeting time – move from 5:30 to 7:00?
9. Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 9 at 5:30PM
10. Adjourn

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
STONINGTON, CT
21 OCT 18 AM 11:08
CYNTHIA LAOWIG
TOWN CLERK

**Masons Island Fire District Meeting
September 14, 2021 – 5:30 PM
Masons Island Yacht Club
Minutes of Meeting**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by President Ethan Tower. Board members Tom Cooke (Secretary), Tom Flaherty, Kristin Foster, David Krupp, John Parry, Scott Parry, Bill Taylor (Treasurer), and Roads Manager Rufus Allyn were present. Board Member Bart Chamberlain and Tax Collector Liaison Alex Ellison were not present.

2. Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes

There were no changes to the Agenda.

3. Approval/Correction of Previous Minutes

a. Motion to approve the minutes from July 13, 2021. The minutes for the July 13, 2021, meeting were approved with the following modifications:

- i. Item 5, Treasurer's Report: The last sentence of the first paragraph was changed as follows: "He pointed out that Board approval will be required for pond expenses, and discussion ensued concerning the purchases of chemicals for treatment of the pond, which the Board voted to discontinue earlier in the last fiscal year *based on the recommendation of the pond committee.*"
- ii. Item 6.d.i. New "Dead End" Signs: The last sentence of the first paragraph was changed to read as follows: "Members of the Board expressed support for the proposed redesign which limited the content to "Dead End/No Turnaround Ahead."

4. President's Report – Ethan Tower

a. Emergency Calls – 7 for July and 8 for August; 15 for the fiscal year. Ethan added that two of the fifteen calls were for downed wires.

b. Appointments

- i. **Traffic Control: TBD.** Ethan continues to look for a volunteer to serve in the Traffic Control capacity. Scott Parry stated that he would consider taking on the role.

5. Treasurer's Report – Bill Taylor

Bill reported that the books are closed for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The 2020-2021 year-end surplus of \$40,912.97 was moved to the Roads Reserve in accordance with the vote taken at the Annual Meeting. The transfer brought the Roads Reserve total to \$100,785.

With respect to the 2021-2022 budget, Bill noted that the budgeted transfer of \$10,000 to the Catastrophe Reserve fund, resulting in a total Catastrophe Reserve of \$44,861 as reflected on the balance sheet. Bill added that the receipt of additional tax revenue in

the amount of \$26,166 brings total tax income to date at 99.9% of the budgeted \$274,150. Crack sealing costs came in at \$8,100 with a management fee of \$1,215.

Discussion ensued about costs related to the pond for outstanding bills and for the potential additional cost of proceeding with the permitting and purchasing of carp. The Board expressed support for moving forward with the proposed use of carp to clean and maintain the pond, provided the cost was within budget. Ethan stated that he would contact Chris Ficke to determine the status of outstanding bills and the costs associated with the carp proposal.

6. Committee Reports

a. Tick Committee – Jean Anderson

John Parry reported that Jean is in the process of finalizing pricing for the 2022 tick treatment season, and that it will be based on a sliding scale tied to the number of residences participating in the program. John added that Jean intends to attend the October meeting with further details. The Committee recommends that for the first year of the “new” program, residents will be asked to identify their contractor of choice. A communication to residents is being prepared by Jean for the end of the calendar year. It will include a hard date for residents to identify their preferred contractor as the goal remains to start the program earlier in the year than it has in the past.

b. Shoreline Protection Committee – Kristin Foster

Kristin reviewed a thorough report on the status of the shoreline along Chippechaug trail, a recommendation by CT DEEP experts that we proceed with an upland berm of plantings with landscape rockery as soon as possible, communications with Town Zoning/Inland Wetland Enforcement Officer Candace Palmer, and consultations with experts on the plants best suited for the purpose of holding soil. She noted that switchgrasses have been recommended by Juliana Barrett of UCONN. Kristin noted that the recommended plants can be purchased for under \$900 with taxes, and that the switchgrasses could be planted after rocks are in place. A copy of Kristin’s report, including a diagram of where the rocks and plants would be located, is attached.

Kristin stated that the McGuire family is prepared to donate rocks for the purpose described above. She added that Candace Palmer has asked that the Committee obtain endorsements of the proposed project, including the use of rocks, from CT DEEP. Given the location of the proposed work, the Town of Stonington will have to approve the final plan. The concern is that use of the rocks may have unintended effects.

Kristin also described a site visit to Fenwick where protective actions, including a road-raising project and a living shoreline project, have been completed. The Committee was able to gather considerable information about the techniques and materials used and the challenges faced, including fundraising challenges.

A discussion ensued concerning the proper funding source in the budget for purchase of the switchgrasses.

c. Committee on Traffic Volume – John Parry

Having completed its work, the Committee on Traffic Volume was dissolved with thanks to John Parry for his hard work. A discussion ensued considering the suspected removal of the portable speed limit signs. There was conjecture that the signs were moved in connection with roadside construction. Rufus Allyn opined that the signs, which are reflective, can be left out at night. As the Yacht Club season has ended, the Board agreed that the temporary 10 MPH signs can be removed and reinstalled at the beginning of next season.

d. Traffic Control – Ethan Tower

Ethan reported that the number of turnarounds at the guardhouse has been declining, which suggest that traffic control measures have been effective. The average daily turnarounds have been 25 during the weekdays and 45 on weekends. Ethan added Enders Island traffic accounts for roughly one third of the weekend traffic. A discussion ensued about whether Enders Island has created its own car stickers.

e. Roads Committee – Tom Flaherty

Tom reported that the crack sealing process went well. Rufus added that the machines used by the contractor were too big to access some spots and that in future years two contractors may be needed to get all the locations requiring sealing. Rufus added that the project approved for Yacht Club Road will be moving forward. A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of revisiting the Crossover Road project next year.

Because Tom Flaherty is moving off-island, he can no longer serve on the Roads Committee. Tom was thanked for his good work on the Committee.

f. Nominating Committee – Scott Parry / Kristin Foster

There was no report from the Nominating Committee at this time, and the Committee plans to gear up in December for next fiscal year's appointments. Ethan pointed out that the Roads Committee position must be filled by a Board Member.

7. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

8. New Business

Residents asked whether a sign should be installed on Seagull Lane. Rufus stated that he did not think a sign was necessary and the Board agreed. Rufus added that residents have been planting off their property and too close to the road. He plans to speak with the residents in the hope that they will voluntarily move the plantings.

9. Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 19 at 5:30PM

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:34.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas F. Cooke - Secretary

Coastline Retention Through Landscaping Proposal 2

Residents of Mason's Island within the Fire District (MIFD) are concerned about the measured loss of shoreline near our main road, Chippechaug Trail, near Allyn's Alley. In July of 2020, there was 37' between the road and the shoreline. By January of 2021, we had lost 3.5' with no named storms to explain a loss. Through the formation of a shoreline protection task force and community education presentations, MIFD voters approved in May of 2021 hiring the engineering firm, GZA, to do a feasibility study. The study should provide three options of what we may be able to do to secure the future use of our road. The study was started in late July & will most likely have it back by November. No matter what it suggests we do, we know it will be expensive.

In the meantime, our shoreline protection task force continues to research ideas and to meet with coastal experts. During one such meeting in September of 2020 with three experts from the D.E.E.P.'s Land and Water Management Division: Harry Yamalis, David Koziak, and Marcy Balint, it was recommended we create an upland berm of plantings with landscape rockery as soon as possible. The plants would hopefully become established enough to hold the soil in the event of a large future storm and immediately absorb storm water runoff coming down Chippechaug Trail. The rocks would disperse any wave action that reaches that point. We would create a line of plants alternating with rocks parallel to Chippechaug Trail approximately 15' east of the road on Masons Island Property Owners Association (MIPOA) land which borders the road. It would be about 100' long starting south of 19 Chippechaug Trail and ending across from Allyn's Alley. It is this idea that we are pursuing here and seeking approval from Stonington's flood plain managers and MIPOA.

After meeting with Rufus Allyn of the Masons Island Company, he recommended we contact Candy Palmer, Stonington's Planning and Zoning Board's staff liaison. She looked at the plot plans and noted the area is in a flood zone identified as a "V" zone. This means we will need to get the town's permission to do anything in this area. It was recommended a draft plan be created that she will present to the town's flood plain managers for approval. This document, an aerial and distance photos from the road to the shore of the site, plus location marks on a plot survey map were sent to Ms. Palmer for review and approval.

There is 20' of land to the east of the road, owned by the Masons Island Property Owners Association, on which to put plants and some rocks. Resident, Phyllis McGuire who lives, across the street from the area of concern to our road, at 3 Sandpiper, has offered extra rocks from her property. Through excavation and blasting, she has offered approximately 25 rocks roughly 3'-4' in diameter. The idea is to place these rocks beside the road alternating them with plants for about a 100' run North to South 15' from the road's edge. We if can act soon, i.e., this fall, the McGuire's contractor may still have equipment on site to move the rocks for us at no cost.

To learn about the existing plants along our coastline and to determine which would be best suited for holding the soil we invited Juliana Barrett, to our site in June 2021. Juliana is a salt marsh plants expert who works for UCONN Avery Point's Seagrass program. She recommended planting switchgrasses. We then asked our GZA project manager, Bin Wang, about doing this planting this fall. She thought it would be fine and planting soon might help hold the shoreline from future storm damage.

Estimates for 28-30 switchgrasses are under \$900 with taxes. The MIFD board voted in September 2021 to support this cost.

Juliana Barrett recommended Cape Coastal Nursery, in Dennis, MA which sells native switchgrasses, a dwarf panicum variety, 1-gal plant, which grows to 2-2 1/2' for \$15 & a 3-gal "heavy metal" panicum variety for \$28 which grows to 3-4'.

We would be looking for volunteers to plant the switchgrasses after the rocks are in place.
See attached diagram of the approximate location for the rocks and plants beside Chippechaug Trail.

Kristin N Foster,
Masons Island Fire District Board Member & Shoreline Task Force Member

