Select Board Meeting Minutes
June 1, 2026 at 6:00PM
Town office

Attendees.

All Select Board members were present: Jane Conrad, Steve Cartwright, Randy Elwell, Bryan Morse, and Tammy Willey

Others present: Brandon Leppanen, Irene Ames, Erin Dent, Lorraine Walker, Denise Morris, Alexa Cunningham, Nichole Price

And via Zoom: Loreen Meyer, Ken Oelberger

Regular Meeting. Ms. Conrad called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Adjustments to Agenda. Planning Board nominations were added alongside the Budget Committee nominations.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest. None.

Minutes from Last Meeting. It was discussed whether the minutes from the May 18th meeting should include the bid amount that was rejected for a tax-acquired property. Mr. Leppanen stated that it's public record, so the figure was not removed. With a motion from Mr. Cartwright and a second from Mr. Elwell, the minutes from the Select Board meeting on May 18th were unanimously approved as written.

Communications. Mr. Leppanen received a communication from Ms. Walker but stated he would discuss it later in the meeting. Additionally, a resident has been emailing him regularly about street sweeping. The resident is concerned that not enough sand gets swept off the road, especially on Route 131. Mr. Leppanen communicated to him that this is primarily a state responsibility.

Mr. Elwell asked if the State has yet swept the roads this year, and Mr. Leppanen explained that they swept part of 131 in Tenants Harbor and said they would be back, though he isn't sure when that will happen.

Warrant. Ms. Ames clarified that for the tax-acquired property on Ridge Rd that was sold, the previous owner is deceased and did not leave a will, so she will send send the balance after closing (excess the Town's expenses and owed taxes) to the State as unclaimed property, and the previous owner's potential heirs can reach out to the State, who will figure out who's legally entitled to what.

The disbursement of $167,791.58 as specified in the Treasurer's Warrant was approved by consensus.

Public Comments. Ms. Walker commented that nothing has changed with the unpermitted junkyard on Ripley Creek Rd—the tenant is still parking on a neighbor's property, one neighbor couldn't get home the other day, and the junk isn't cleaned up. Ms. Walker asked what will happen now that his deadline to get it cleaned up has passed.

Ms. Morris commented that the problem is that the tent is on the driveway, so the guy does not have room for both a tent for the junk and his vehicles, so he keeps parking in the road and the Cunninghams' property. He stayed off the Cunninghams' property for only about two weeks after she sent him a certified letter.

Ms. Cunningham explained that she sent him a certified letter requesting that he remove his stuff from her property by May 15th, and the cars were removed for a while but are now back. She added that she's considering putting boulders on the property so cars can't be parked there, if everyone agrees that this is a good next step.

Ms. Conrad asked whether the Code Enforcement Officer gave the tenant until the end of May to move everything. Mr. Leppanen replied that he did, but the property owner reached out to request a 1-week extension because she has had to be away to take care of a family member. Mr. Leppanen commented that she has been working with the Town and seems committed to cleaning up the property, and he assumes Mr. Brackett will grant the extension but isn't sure. The code enforcement officer has been working with the tenant on the property to get him to move all of his 'junk' into the tent, which would avoid a hearing and finding by the select board that he is operating an unpermitted junkyard. The problem is that he moves it temporarily, then it is back in areas where it may not be stored.

Mr. Leppanen explained that the issue of his blocking a town road is a separate legal and enforcement issue, as a potential road hazard. He gave Ms. Walker his phone number to contact him when it happens so he can address it in the moment. When one car is parked in the grass, it isn't a hazard alone. The final issue of vehicles or junk being stored on Ms. Cunningham's property is not something the Town can enforce or take action on.

Mr. Elwell asked whether Ripley Creek Rd is a Town road. Mr. Leppanen replied that it is, and the right-of-way extends beyond the road pavement.

Ms. Morris commented that one reason the tenant is putting vehicles in the road is because the driveway is filled with junk and the tent. Ms. Walker added that since there is no room to turn around in the driveway, vehicles turn around at her house instead.

Ms. Cunningham suggested that she could put up the boulders so he can't park there, and he will then have to figure out where to park, either at a different location or by moving the junk and tent in the driveway.

Mr. Elwell asked whether there are any ordinances about parking on the side of the road. Mr. Leppanen clarified that if something is a hazard in a Town right-of-way, the Town can take action. Mr. Elwell suggested that action be taken. Ms. Conrad commented that if the CEO gives the property owner the 1-week extension (which is not certain), the Board should take action after that week. Ms. Walker asked why they need an additional week. Ms. Conrad replied that the CEO has discretion on this point, and the Board will defer to his judgement. Mr. Leppanen reiterated that the property owner asked for another week because she's the one driving the cleanup, and she's had to be away to take care of a family member in the hospital. He also clarified in response to a question that this is the first time she has requested an extension.

Ms. Conrad suggested that Mr. Leppanen tell Mr. Brackett that after the 1-week extension (if it's granted), the Town is done being accommodating. All Board members were in agreement.

Mr. Elwell commented that the one car parked in the grass is okay, but if he has a vehicle in the right-of-way at some point it should be towed. Ms. Conrad responded that they need to clarify with the Town lawyer whether the Board would need to meet to decide whether a hazard exists (per statute) or whether they could delegate that determination to Mr. Leppanen. Mr. Leppanen will ask the Town lawyer. Ms. Walker commented that if the Town did take action on vehicles parked in the right-of-way, the tenant would have to get rid of the tent on the driveway to move cars there.

Mr. Elwell added that Mr. Leppanen should have a letter sent to the tenant telling him what will happen.

Ms. Conrad commented that if Ms. Cunningham wants to put boulders on the property line, that's her decision, but she hopes she doesn't have to.

Discussion and Action Items.

Consider renewal of liquor license for The Barn in Port Clyde (no hearing required). A hearing is not required for this renewal because the establishment has existed for more than 5 years. Mr. Leppanen has not received any complaints about the business. With a motion from Mr. Cartwright and a second from Mr. Morse, all voted in favor renewing The Barn's liquor license.

Status of tax-acquired properties. Lot 10 on Ridge Rd has closed. 47 Ridge Rd is under contract. The Select Board rejected a bid on the Cline Rd property because it was too low, so the property is still listed and accepting offers. All Select Board members signed the quit claim deed for Lot 10 on Ridge Rd.

Nomination of of budget committee and planning board members. With a motion from Ms. Conrad and a second from Mr. Elwell, all voted in favor of appointing Katie Crandall as an alternate to the Budget Committee.

With a motion from Ms. Conrad and a second from Mr. Elwell, all voted in favor of re-appointing Richard Moskowitz and Anne Cogger as members of the Planning Board and Allison Briggs and Elaine Taylor as alternates to the Planning Board.

Comprehensive plan tracking tool. Ms. Dent presented the finalized version of the tool to track all committees' progress on strategies in the 2025 comprehensive plan. Each committee will need to fill out a form detailing their progress twice a year. Ms. Conrad will email all of the committee chairs with instructions. Ms. Dent is available to meet with committees to help them use the tool if requested.

Review progress on Select Board Priorities for 2025 – 2026. Ms. Conrad outlined the progress that has been made on the priorities that the Select Board set at the beginning of the fiscal year. See the attachment at the end of these minutes.

Discuss and set Select Board Priorities for 2026 – 2027. Mr. Cartwright commented that addressing the housing crisis should be a priority, though he's not sure what the Town can do about it. Mr. Morse expressed that continuing the discussion around short term rentals should be part of this. Ms. Conrad added that Mr. Leppanen and Ms. Dent are working on a review of housing-related land use ordinances and we will propose amendments to the voters after that review is complete. Additionally, the Town is collaborating with the St. George Community Development Corporation on their Brookside housing development.

Mr. Elwell suggested that the Select Board should also continue to collaborate with the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association to encourage progress on the pagoda/Wildcat building. Ms. Conrad commented that economic development in general should be a priority for the Board, including collaboration with Colby College, MCFA, the CDC, Herring Gut, the Island Institute, the St. George Business Alliance, and others. She added that this is a good time to have discussions with the new presence of Colby and MCFA. Mr. Elwell asked whether a committee should be formed to address this. Ms. Conrad explained that in January she convened an group from a few organizations (the CDC, SGBA, and Town) to discuss coordination regarding economic development. Mr. Morse suggested that rather than a committee a working group should be formed.

Mr. Leppanen questioned why all of the organizations listed are nonprofits, especially ones that are headquartered outside of town. He added that he doesn't mean to discredit their efforts, but local businesses should be involved.

Ms. Conrad clarified that she has been viewing the SGBA as a representative of local business, but anyone could come to the discussions. Mr. Leppanen added that they would need to be informed about when the discussions occur. Ms. Conrad stated that she would ask the SGBA president if he thinks that there are other groups that need to be included—for example, a goal in the comprehensive plan is to have an organized working waterfront group to collaborate with the Town. Mr. Leppanen suggested that the fishing co-ops could be involved. Ms. Conrad stated that she believes some fishermen and organizations are members of the SGBA. Mr. Elwell

suggested that a working group could be convened in the middle of the year, with local business invited. Mr. Morse emphasized that it should be open to all local business owners.

Additionally, Ms. Conrad explained that another potential economic development project is developing a TIF district. She clarified that the Town doesn't need to have a large business coming in to develop a TIF, and the income from it could be used for projects to help bring in businesses.

Mr. Leppanen commented that local government is unlikely to play a direct role in economic development, but he recommended that the Town should do an ordinance review for businesses, as is being done for housing. Ms. Conrad agreed, though she added that St. George has relatively few regulations for businesses. Mr. Leppanen stated that businesses might think otherwise—for example, the Black Harpoon is not allowed to serve lunch.

Ms. Conrad suggested that a third priority be resilience. She added that on June 25th at 5:30pm in the upstairs room is a public meeting to discuss resilient design alternatives for Cold Storage Rd and Factory Rd. She stated that she hopes people will come even if they don't live near these roads so that people become familiar with the kinds of decisions the Town will continue to have to make due to sea-level rise and strong storms.

The Select Board set housing, economic development, and resilience as their priorities for the upcoming year.

Update on letter sent to Spectrum Generations explaining why the town voted to reject their funding request. Ms. Conrad explained that she sent the letter to Spectrum Generations and also sent copies to the town's state representatives. Angus King's office called about the fact that St. George isn't getting senior services from the area agencies on aging (AAA), and they recommended calling Ann Matlack. Mr. Elwell commented that it would be better to give money to local services like the Town paramedicine program, CDC programs, and others rather than to Spectrum Generations.

Update on St. George Days. Ms. Conrad explained that the working group met, and Brandon is putting together a flyer with all of the events that are occurring. Ms. Conrad told Colby College that they can have a table to talk about what they're doing in Port Clyde. Bill Torpey suggested having a boat parade right before the fireworks, so that may be a new event this year.

Upcoming events:

- June 25 public meeting to learn more about the options for making Cold Storage Rd and Factory Rd more resilient – 5:30 p.m. Town Hall upstairs room
- St. George Days' Parade July 18, 11 a.m., other events that week see Community Calendar

Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Leppanen reported that he has a request-for-proposal ready to go for a new Town/school auditor. He just needs to run the timeline by the school.

Additionally, Mr. Leppanen and Ms. Ames are waiting to hear from Christine Wotton, the school superintendent, about a teacher to serve on the Scholarship Committee. The application deadline has passed, so applications need to be reviewed.

The Select Board signed the warrant for the June 9th vote on the school budget.

Mr. Leppanen added that he emailed to all Board members the proposal from Haley Ward, the potential consultant company for the ordinance review. Discussing the proposal could be an agenda item for the next meeting. It includes a two-pronged effort: 1) compliance with state legislation, for which there's state grant funding available, and 2) looking at current ordinances to see where there are building requirements that are strict and act as barriers to housing development. The proposal is in a not-to-exceed amount with an hourly rate, so the Town could cease the effort at any point. The Select Board will review the proposal and come back with comments.

There are ongoing fundraising efforts for Snow's Point Lodge. The Parks & Rec committee or boosters will continue to fundraise, and Mr. Leppanen is working with some volunteers to do more targeted fundraising, as well. Mr. Morse asked what the next steps are for the building. Mr. Leppanen responded that next up is bringing in an electrician for the overhead lighting, figuring out how to put in one or two heat pumps to make it usable next winter, and putting in flooring. Ms. Conrad asked whether the new budget includes enough funds to cover those items. Mr. Leppanen replied that he won't know until he gets estimates back, but he hopes so. A few Select Board members expressed that good progress has been made so far based on donations.

Additionally, Mr. Leppanen reported that Mr. Cline and Ms. Dent will be working together to apply for a MaineDOT Small Harbor Improvement Program grant to make improvements at the Tenants Harbor landing, including replacing the concrete pieces on the Tenants Harbor landing ramp and resetting new pilings as the existing ones are quite old. The kiosk at the landing will also be revamped this summer, as the plexiglass is no longer very usable.

Mr. Leppanen asked the Board how they feel about asking some other committees, such as the Harbor Committee and Planning Board, to put the recordings of their meetings on YouTube, given that the committees are advisory to the Board. The Parks & Rec Committee is already planning to do so. <u>There was general agreement among Board members that this is a good idea, but it should be understood that not every meeting will be recorded and posted on the town Youtube channel</u>.

Committee Reports.

The Planning Board hasn't met.

The Board of Appeals will have an organizational meeting on June 17th at 5pm.

The Harbor Committee hasn't met.

The Budget Committee hasn't met

The Cemetery Committee meets June 3rd at 4:30pm.

The Emergency Services Committee hasn't met.

The Scholarship Committee will meet once a teacher is recruited to be a member.

The Conservation Commission hasn't met, but they had a program at the Fort Point trail on May 30 during which they walked the trail and examined the ash trees along it. A State entomologist spoke about the emerald ash borer, and there's a possibility that she will make Fort Point a focus site for studying the emerald ash borer. The Commission explained that they want to save some trees, and for those that can't be saved, they will cut down limbs that might otherwise fall on the trail. An article about the Commission's efforts on this project was published in the June Town newsletter.

Additionally, they are applying for a grant from the Maine Trails Program to have a parking lot and a boardwalk at the scouting property near the transfer station. They recently had a wetland delineation done, which was needed to determine the length of the boardwalk. The boardwalk will need to be professionally designed and approved since it crosses a wetland. The Commission also plans to go to a Planning Board meeting to figure out permitting requirements. Ms. Conrad is working on a letter of support for their grant application.

Their next meeting is June 4th at 4pm.

The Shellfish Committee met May 19th in Warren. The Shellfish Warden has been busy with court cases. Additionally, Thomaston temporarily closed Mill River Park to dogs starting on May 1 due to ongoing water quality concerns in the St. George River, as dog waste is one of the biggest contributing factors to closures. This ban will be in effect for 1 year.

The Solid Waste & Recycling Committee met on May 19th. They're continuing to expand their compost program. So far they have produced 1713 pounds of compost. Additionally, the roadside cleanup went well. More than 22 people came in to sign up, and a lot of people cleaned up without coming to the town office first.

The Committee is concerned about the rigid plastic at the transfer station. It's difficult to get rid of, so they're trying to figure out what to do with it instead of sending it to the landfill. They're planning to talk to the Grace Innovation Center to see if there's anything they can do with it, such as creating materials for 3D printing.

The Parks & Recreation Committee meets on June 9th at 6pm.

The Resilience Committee is working in working groups for the resilience plan. One group is the "investigating options" team, and they met recently to continue considering potential actions, benefits, general timeframes and costs, possible funding sources, and who would need to be involved. The full Resilience Committee is meeting June 3rd at 5pm. Mr. Elwell has agreed to be Ms. Conrad's backup for resilience meetings when she can't attend.

The Open Space Committee met on May 27th and talked about the survey. They also input the paper surveys that have been collected thus far into an online form for data analysis after the survey is closed (the deadline is August 31st).

Adjournment. Mr. Morse moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Elwell. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:46PM.

ATTACHMENT **2025 -2026 Select Board Priorities**

1. Continue to improve communications with residents about all issues – through the town website, newsletter, notifications, and other means, so that residents always have access to accurate and timely information about what town government is doing. Ongoing obligation, but essentially complete.

2. Engage in a fundraising campaign to raise money to renovate the Snow's Point recreational property (donated by the youth & scouting organization).
Ongoing, with Parks & Rec and small working group leading this effort.

3. Improve understanding of the legal and fiscal interrelationship between the Town of St. George and the Municipal School Unit, and improve communication between the Select Board and town staff and School Board and Superintendent, particularly around fiscal matters. Ongoing, but essentially complete now that new expenditure warrant process will be implemented July 1, and regular communication between finance depts.

4. Consider means by which St. George might monitor short-term rentals, including a registry and inspection program like Camden passed recently.
Community Conversation to be held this summer, led by consultant, after which we can decide on next steps.

5. Explore acquiring additional land for conservation or preservation, either by donation or by setting aside additional funding in the future to purchase property for this purpose.
Additional funding included in town budget for matching funds for possible purchases; Open Space Plan under development & public input (survey) will guide future decisions.

Other projects already underway, or to undertake in 2025-26:

Resilience

Community Resilience Plan underway, expected completion later this year/early 2027

Budget & Finance

Include Comp Plan priorities (like need for a planner) in budget development & staffing (Select Board, Budget Committee, TM)
Ongoing responsibility every year (not a separate annual priority)

Explore / develop a TIF program for the voters' consideration (TIF committee; Select Board) Underway

Begin revaluation work (KRT consultants + informational meetings)
Awaiting word from KRT regarding when this should begin.

Capital Improvement Plan (T.M.) to be undertaken 2026-27

Staff salary assessment (T.M.) in progress

Land Use issues

Begin work on Open Space Plan underway; fill out survey!

Consider site-specific zoning to allow for CDC housing development (Planning Board; Select Board) underway, but need more info from CDC
Consider ordinance changes required by recently passed State & other possible changes to remove barriers to new housing underway

Economic Development

Work on TIF program underway
Continue to promote engagement, support, and understanding of our working waterfront industries with panel discussions and educational information on the website and through other means (Erin Dent, Jane Conrad, Toni Small, et al.) 3 programs completed + Scuttlebutt will be published shortly

Community Education

Educational info on website re how residents can and should monitor their private wells; resources web site info posted; 1st of 3 programs completed
Host a panel to discuss what is being done and by whom to monitor coastal waters around the peninsula – by Herring Gut, David Taylor, U. Maine (Jane will coordinate) scheduled for Fall 2027
Working waterfront panels, above. 3 panel discussions held.

Public Health

Community Paramedicine program will collaborate with the proposed CDC telehealth hub discussions ongoing, with additional possibilities that might include Rockland District Nursing to support patients needing ongoing support

Adopt an artificial intelligence policy for the town (Bill Batty to lead team to propose policy to Select Board) awaiting MMA draft AI policy for our consideration