

**Town of Edgecomb Select Board
Minutes
June 5, 2017 6:00pm**

**Present: Jack Sarmanian, Ted Hugger, Mike Smith, Katie Wurtzell (Recording Secretary)
Ernest Martin, Senator Dow, Representative Stephanie Hawke**

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from May 22, 2017 approved with small amendment. Mike made motion to approve, Ted seconded. Approved 3-0.

3. MDOT— Ernest Martin. Re: Route 27 Intersection



Conceptual map of Rt 27 and Rt 1 intersection from Maine DOT.

Ernest brought a conceptual map of Rt 27 and Rt 1 intersection. The new intersection design is a Florida T with a protected right. This change has been designed to help ease traffic through intersection and reduce frequently occurring low-impact accidents.

Description: The left hand turn off of Rt 1 south (from Damariscotta onto Cross Rd, Edgecomb). The change will focus on Rt 27 turning left onto Rt 1. Cars will go from Rt 27 to a protected lane in the middle of Rt 1 and will then merge into the southbound lane. This will allow the cars to only worry about north-bound traffic when crossing Rt 1. An island will be built middle of Rt 1 to protect cars from oncoming traffic. Ernest said 14,000 cars a day come through this intersection and there are frequent low impact accidents. Projected time-frame is 2019 construction with advertisement early 2019 and the hope of completing construction before July. Rt 1 would need to be slightly widened; there is historical value to adjoining property – the construction would be designed to minimize impact to this property.

Question from public: How wide is area for emergency response vehicles? Would it block emergency vehicles if there was backed up traffic? Ernest responded that fire trucks would be able to fit on shoulder, or bridge the island.

Mike raised the question of lighting of Rt 1 crossroad. Ernest said he would look into that and also into repavement on Cross Rd.

Ernest remarked there is a problem of cars speeding through this intersection. Low resources for local speed enforcement is an issue throughout the area. Traffic calming efforts will be added into plan.

Mike asked if there were any other future project planned? Ernest remarked traffic levels have stabled in area.

Question from public: How long has this plan in the works? Ernest said since 2015.

Ernest will touch base with Selectboard on another time to come back with more detailed plans (late July, early August).

Senator Dow asked how long it takes people to relearn intersection? Ernest said that whenever there is a new intersection, they send out literature, media etc to help educate the public.

Jack asked Ernest if there is anything to community can do to help slow speed limit? Ernest said that the town can request a Speed Study, though sometimes that can result in a speed increase.

Question from public- Is there an example of another similar intersection? Not many, but there is one in Augusta.

4. Senator Dow & Representative Hawke

Broadband

LD1399 - An Act to Encourage Broadband Coverage in Rural Maine is potentially coming to vote soon.

Mike remarked that Edgecomb is certainly in support. Stephanie responded that she had has many responses, all supportive.

Ted remarked that there is already some fiber optic on peninsula, but people aren't educated on their options. Jack asked what it would look like if passed? Stephanie said \$7 million investment statewide, but unsure. Mike asked if they thought it would pass. Senator Dow said it makes good business sense. Stephanie stated that she hasn't heard any opposition.

County Budget

Mike asked Stephanie about county budget. He said county said to plan on 1.5% increase, and it ended up being more. Stephanie said this is a bipartisan issue, and the Lincoln commissioners fought hard for the budget. Jack said that he is on County advisory board, and that when they discussed the budget it was at 1%, but this was before union negotiations finished. Union negotiations upped the budget. Mike said that Edgecomb needs to know budget increases to plan and now they cannot depend on county projected figures.

Educational Funding

Mike brought up educational funding. Three citizen petitions have been put forth. One is for 100% funding for special education from state. This would alleviate budget issues if a special education student were to move to Edgecomb; currently this could add approximately \$250,000 to budget. Mike said that this mandate should be a priority. Currently state only funds 11% of Edgecomb education. Referendum occurred for approval for state to fund 55% of education and 100% of special education.

Comment from public - Town cannot afford to keep raising property taxes.

Comment from public - Town has done terrific job keeping bill down even with state funding dropping down from \$600k to ~\$300k. Town is so strapped by this issue that the town can't do other things. High property taxes could drive out young families with kids, retired people.

Question from public - How much does state contribute to special education? Senator Dow said approximately 17/18%. Senator Dow said he had a bill for 100% special education and disability along with ESL teachers but it did not go through this session. He said looking at the business and economic health of the state, which he considers to be going downhill with young people moving out of the state to find employment elsewhere. Senator Dow said every group is asking for more money but there's no more money to give and the only way to get more is to take it from another cause/group. He said we aren't doing everything we can to promote and grow the economy in the state of Maine. He said currently we are 6 or 7th ranked in New England but above average in the country. He also said he'd like to extend the school day 40 minutes.

Jack thanked Senator Dow and Representative Hawke for being here. He said we need to find a way to steady tax increase in order to become a more sustainable community.

5. Harbormaster – Budget

Corning not in attendance, pushed to another meeting

6. Scott Griffin, Road Commissioner – Paving Plan

Scott would like to do some paving on Shore Rd. and Middle Rd. Money has been saved throughout paving projects, and Scott would like to put money towards these roads. \$60k is budgeted for each of those roads. Scott said we have enough money to do more on those roads and he is working on those numbers to find out what he needs. Jack said it is critical for him to continue the work and he has done a stupendous job thus far. Currently there is a surplus on the account. Scott says this is the last two roads of the project and everything else is going well. This is Phase 3 of a 3 year plan and it is right on schedule. Mike remarked we will invite Scott back after July 1, to discuss plowing budget.

7. Warrants

General Warrant #26:

\$36,090.57 - School - Payroll

\$6,904.86 - School - Retirement

\$4,505.36 - School - Payables

\$11,344.60 - General Expenses

Total: \$58,845.39

Mike makes motion to approve general warrant, Jack seconded, passed 3-0.

Wastewater Warrant #112 - \$1977

Mike makes motion to approve wastewater warrant, Jack seconded, passed 3-0.

8. Old Business

Students from Edgecomb Eddy came to town hall and placed flags in cemetery with Ted. He stated students were engaged, had lots of questions. Perhaps next year the historical society would be involved and could be a whole day thing with lunch at the Fort. Jack states this is a great way to tie kids into the community

Ted states the Edgecomb Economic Committee will be meeting Mondays 4:45pm to 5:45pm. He invited the public to come and to bring ideas.

Jack brought up the Old School. Grant was given for tennis courts at old school, but it's not being used anymore. LWCF project. Money was therefore used for the River-Link Trail.

a. Foreclosed Properties

Mike brought up policy regarding foreclosed property. He states there is a policy in place. First offer is to previous owner, then second right of refusal to abutters. Mike stated that in July, after the start of the Fiscal Year there would be more discussion about current foreclosed properties.

Ted states that part of this is part of understanding what the town can and cannot do regarding Foreclosing properties. Question sent to the legal department: What if foreclosed property has renters? If so what if the town does not know if rent is being paid to previous

owner? Town wants to be fair who is living in building, fair to previous owner, and fair to tax payers. Town does not know if currently occupied foreclosed properties are paying rent.

Question from public - Will the town advertise if there is a foreclosed property? They could potentially get more money that way. Mike answers that town is not in the business of making money, and just needs to recoup back taxes that are owed. Public states that town could make a lot of money from advertising properties. Mike says this is not how the town will make money, and that ideally town wants to sell property without it going to bid. Jack states this is why we need a policy, for current and future selectmen to follow

9. New Business

10. Public Comment

Roy - There is a significant event planned at Schmid Preserve and the fire department was not informed. Perhaps there should be a need for a permit? Department needs to be informed to be able to protect community. Ted responded that talk of permits has occurred, but they don't want to cause paperwork nightmare. There should be a way to inform respective authorities. Schmid Preserve event is June 24.

Jack thanks the public for being at meeting and states how important it is to show the state that Edgecomb is an involved community.

11. Adjourn

Mike makes motion to adjourn 7:25pm, Ted seconds.