

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen  
Minutes of Meeting 10/30/2012  
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Mtg Room

Members present: Spencer Booker, Chairman, Jim Newman

Also present: Adam Wilson, Town Administrator; Police Chief Randhi Belain, Sgt Paul Manning, MV Museum Director David Nathans, Elise LeBovit, Craig Dripps, Chair of MV Museum's Lighthouse Committee Jim Richardson; Operations Director for all 3 lighthouses Betsey Mayhew; Richard Skidmore.

The meeting began at 5:30 pm

-1<sup>st</sup> on the agenda was a review of minutes from the 10-16 Selectmen's meeting.

Jim made a motion to accept the minutes from October 16th. Spencer seconded.

**The Board voted 2 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

-1st on the agenda was a meeting with the representatives from the MV Museum. David Nathans introduced everyone present. He thanked the Aquinnah Community Preservation Committee for their work in providing funds for restorative work done for the lighthouse. David said that they have alerted the Coast Guard on the issue of the Lighthouse needing to be moved. They have had a lease arrangement with the CG to manage since 2004 for all three lighthouses (East Chop, Edgartown & Aquinnah).

-David said that GH lighthouse will cost 500K to totally restore and maintain. He said the cliffs are "slumping"; losing ground and eventually become such a hazard to the standing of the structure. AQ CPC has paid for a 3 year study beginning this year as to what the topographical situation is. "International Chimney" out of Buffalo has done a site visit and given preliminary options as to where it could go. Moving the lighthouse could cost any where from 1 – 3 million, and only after the structure has been fully restored can it be moved.

-David said there is also an idea to create a grout to slow the erosion process. The company doing the World Trade Center work has been contacted. The main concern is retaining enough land around the structure in order to safely move it. 2 -3 years the erosion loss could prevent it being moved.

-David said the Coast Guard might consider in a year or two putting it into the Department of the Interior's transfer process. The Museum hopes to continue the leased arrangement with whoever ends up owning the lighthouse. He said they really don't want to get into the ownership of buildings – it's not their primary mission.

-Elise asked about the lease arrangement currently with the Museum and Coast Guard and the % of revenue that goes to the Museum from lighthouse visitation. Betsey says the museum pays for regular upkeep and maintenance. David said that running the lighthouse as a visitors museum used to lose money but ever since the property went to a fuller schedule, they've made up for the expenses.

-Adam expressed condolences for the loss of Todd Follensby as one of the main lighthouse guides.

-Spencer said that at the last BOS meeting the Board voted to create an ad hoc committee to deal with the issue. David said that it would be great to have a town sponsored committee to help advocate for the lighthouse and to raise funds.

-David talked about the 2000 National Lighthouse Preservation Act. He said local entities have 1<sup>st</sup> crack at acquiring the structures and then it would go out to bid with the general public. This occurs only when a Lighthouse is deemed as excess historical property the Federal Government wishes to pass along ownership.

David talked about the Edgartown Lighthouse. He stated that there is a couple from Arizona who wanted to bid on the structure and planned to live in it if they won the bid. There was discussion about the step by step process in acquisition. Elise said any expenses incurred by the museum would be helpful.

Jim Richardson said the “slumping” is coming from groundwater and the natural springs, and not from erosion. He said it can occur quickly and is unpredictable. Richard S. said having the lighthouse movers come and do a site visit was to make sure they confirmed they could move it. Richard said any further slumping could kill the project. -There was discussion about other options for disassembling the lighthouse and rebuilding it somewhere else. It was asked where can it go. Richard said a move to any abutting property would drop its elevation and probably need a pedestal to keep it visible to the open water. Richard talked about future options and their limitations. The Committee formation was talked about. David said they’d like to have a representative on the committee if possible.

-Jim and Spencer thanked everyone for coming

-Next on the agenda was a review of the warrant. There was discussion about the CPC cattle pound restoration article and notifying the owner. Adam said if he doesn’t get a favorable response from the homeowner to do the repairs, the article can be tabled at the Town Meeting.

Jim made a motion to approve the November 15<sup>th</sup> Special Town Meeting Warrant as presented. Spencer seconded.

**-The Board voted 2 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

-In the Town Administrator’s report, Randhi gave a report about Hurricane Sandy and commended the number of people who worked through the weekend and through the storm. He also thanked the EMT’s who stayed up here over the weekend.

-Adam had Spencer read aloud the commendation letters he had put together for Chip and Steve Mathias for the rescue they both were involved in over the Columbus Day Weekend on Menemsha Pond. Spencer signed the letters on behalf of the Board.

-Adam had Board members sign a conveyance agreement giving NStar the right to take over ownership of the guy wire pole at the Town Landfill. He said it was convenient for the town to have them take ownership and the cost of the transfer was being paid for by South Mountain since the pole’s upgrade was part of the solar array construction.

-In Other Selectmen’s Business, Jim brought up the fact that there are a number of Aquinnah residents who are not in the Chamber of Commerce’s Island Telephone Book. He expressed concern that certain residents had ComCast #’s and were not catalogued in either the Island Book or Verizon’s directory. He thought this was a safety concern that should be addressed. Adam said it’s an island issue as well but in the meantime there can be a request for residents to provide local numbers to be kept on file with local safety officials.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

**The Board voted 2 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

The meeting ended at 6:15 pm