

SELECT BOARD
KATELYN DAMON, BOARD CHAIR
JANUARY BENNETT
INGRID GAITHER

TOWN CLERK / TREASURER
BENJAMIN SUMNER



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
TO THE SELECT BOARD
JAMES FORTUNE

PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATOR
SHARON MORRELL

Town Manager Transition Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 8th 2025

Attendance:

George Dickson, Chair
Lauren Noether, Vice Chair
Heather Spurling, Secretary
Joe Connell, Garth Hallberg, Committee Members.
Absent: Nan Hadlock, Ingrid Gaither, Jim Kehoe

I. Call to Order: 11:14am by Chair George Dickson

II. Approval of Minutes:

Joe moves to accept minutes, Lauren seconds motion. Minutes are adopted unanimously.

III. Review Action Items from Previous Meeting

A. Update Spreadsheet with Town Info

- a. All of the towns the committee intends to contact are included in the shared spreadsheet.
- b. Joe was able to order the towns in a format that is in accordance with our list, rather than in alphabetical order.
- c. Most committee members were able to begin work to update the spreadsheet with their assigned towns.
- d. Discussion about our findings when researching towns:
For some towns there is very little information available online.

George was able to learn more about Isle au Haut, which has a similar form of government and population to the Cranberry Isles, but their budget is a fraction of ours.

Garth learned more about the town of Tremont, which represents several villages (Bass Harbor, Bernard, Gotts Island...)

Some towns meet frequently as a selectboard (weekly or bi-weekly, even).

- e. Discussion about the current function of our Selectboard, including the fact that our Selectboard members spend much of their time in meetings addressing immediate and pressing issues, i.e., “crisis management”.
- f. Discussion about the structure of our town, given 5 islands with multiple off island parking lots and multiple harbors. Our current system in theory could work for the size of our town, but the structure/ sprawling nature complicates things.

IV. New Business

A. Action Items Are agreed upon

- a. Joe will contact Ingrid to see if she would like to pass on one of her towns to Heather for interviewing.
- b. All committee members will begin contacting and interviewing their towns.
- c. George will contact MMA about the “90” Day clause in the document. Do they have a draft warrant, or a sample town manager contract?
- d. George will contact Kaitlyn to streamline the zoom link on the town website

B. Discussion about the “90 Day” Stipulation

- a. The town manager plan must be adopted at a meeting held at least 90 days prior to the annual meeting at which it is to go into effect and, once adopted, is to remain in effect until revoked at a meeting held at least 90 days prior to the annual town meeting or by the adoption of a charter (30-A M.R.S. § 2631(1) & (3)).
- b. The implication would be that the public would be at said meeting, i.e., as a special town meeting and not just a Selectboard meeting.
- c. A special town meeting would need to be held in December 2025 in that case.
- d. George asked whether we need to create a legislation to change the current charter.
- e. Joe pointed out that our role is to write a recommendation for the Selectboard. Lauren added that our committee would be offering up a report to the town and the Selectboard.
- f. Garth agreed, saying that our researched pros & cons could amount to a recommendation without pushing an agenda. He cited an MMA document: “the major obstacle has been fear of loss of control”. That could be one danger in providing a recommendation rather than presenting a list of pros & cons.
- g. Joe posited that we as a committee have the authority to make a recommendation to the town/Selectboard. We can make a

summary with a recommendation, given that we will have done our research over the course of 8 months in order to make an informed decision to present. We would recommend that the Selectboard bring the matter to a vote in that instance.

- h. George clarified our role as a committee, referring the group back to the town website: [Committee to Study Town Manager Transition | Town of Cranberry Isles](#)
- i. Discussion about our timeline: Joe pointed out that if we need to bring a report to the Selectboard in December, our time is slim. He hopes we will be realistic about what we can accomplish before the next town meeting. Lauren pointed out that we as a committee may need to request an extension for our research.
- j. Garth pointed out that a February 1st deadline could give 90 days notice before our next town meeting

V. Subsequent Meeting

- a. Garth mentioned that we could be empowered to have more infrequent committee meetings given what we have accomplished to this point.
- b. The Committee's upcoming meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 29th at 11am.

VI. Adjournment: 12:08pm

- a. Joe moved to adjourn, Heather seconded. All in favor.