

PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2018 (Saturday) MINUTES

12:00 PM – UNION CHURCH, PRUDENCE ISLAND

MEMBERS PRESENT: Keith E. Hamilton, Kevin M. Aguiar, David M. Gleason, Paul F. Kesson, J. Mark Ryan and Linda L. Ujifusa

MEMBERS ABSENT: Elizabeth A. Pedro

ALSO, PRESENT: Senator Jim Seveney and Representative Susan Donovan

Time: 11:55 AM – Meeting of the Prudence Island Planning Commission called to order by Ed “Hap” Aldrich, Chairman of the Prudence Island Planning Commission.

Time: 11:57 AM Meeting adjourned.

Time: 12:00 PM Town Council meeting called to order by Mr. Hamilton.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a Moment of Silence for our men and women serving around the world in harm’s way.

INTRODUCTION OF PRUDENCE ISLAND STATE LEGISLATORS

1. Senator Jim Seveney
2. Representative Susan Donovan

**SITTING AS THE PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**

Mr. Hamilton mentioned that Ms. Pedro was on her honeymoon and was unable to attend.

Motion to move New Business 2 before Old Business 1 made by Mr. Kesson, seconded by Dr. Ryan. Motion passed 6-0. Ms. Pedro was absent.

NB2. Discussion – Prudence Island Dock and Parking. – Greg Marsili, Bristol Harbor Master, presented to residents the current plan for the Bristol Marina, the construction schedule, and the impact that it will have on parking.

Federal Transportation Grant awarded to build marina and improve ferry dock (esp. concern north dock; very dangerous). Complete plan available through Bristol Town Planner who submitted the grant application. CRMC requires Bristol to own the land and provide parking for the marina. This will eliminate the 34 permit parking spaces currently used by Prudence Island residents.

Construction expected to begin late spring, starting March 1, 2019. The annual lease parking will be moved across the street to the Municipal parking lot. This lot is across from Robin Rug. The current parking lot lessees will have first right to these spots, as in years past, then we will move to the waiting list. The lot will be maintained, monitored, and plowed. Handicapped spaces will

remain on a first-come-first-served basis and will stay where they are per State mandate. This is the short-term solution.

Residents were concerned with the impact to daily parking spaces during the construction. If the lot will be policed, which it will be. Are there any other options available to the Prudence Island residents that may be more affordable, or could Bristol and Portsmouth purchase a lot for the Prudence Island residents? How many spaces would be needed for the seasonal day spaces; somewhere between 20-36 spaces. Could the residents get Bristol Town stickered parking passes? Would it be possible to have a shuttle option in conjunction with Roger Williams?

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Discussion – Public Safety Officer Staffing Update. – Chief Lee updated the status of Joe Tavernier with regards to Prudence Island. The police department is following the Town's insurance directives put out by the RI Trust regarding police officers. Even though Joe has been in law enforcement for over 36 years he is still required to attend the RI Municipal Police Academy. There has been coverage on the island. Glen is dealing with some personal issues that the Chief did not want to discuss however there has not been any coverage lost. During the summer there was 2 response boats out on the water on the weekends, and daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The Town has a mutual aid agreement with Bristol. The fire department is also a back-up for the police. There was a traffic study done and 85% of those recorded were adhering to the speed limit.

There are 2 response boats with currently 4 operators. 4 additional officers have completed the Coast Guard training but need more time out on the water operating the boats. The police force has had several officers retire that were qualified to operate the boats. It will take time to have the newer officers become qualified.

This summer has had one of the lowest crime rates to date. There were 10 police reports; 2 arrests; 23 citations; 29 calls for police service; and 254 police-initiated activities.

The police will try to have more of a presence at the ferry dock subject to budget constraints. The green van will be towed after a 2-week notice has been given.

Chief Lee stated he would come over to Prudence Island if any one contacted him with any concerns.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discussion – Island Power Problems. – Mr. Afonso of National Grid, stated that the two compensators on the Island have to be adjusted after the issues in July. They maintain the voltage and will adjust if it varies. It will be difficult to see if that will be sustained because of the time of the season. There is also going to be a voltage regulator that will be going up on the Daniels pole #5 to help maintain the voltage on the north end of the island.

If there are any power concerns at all, please call National Grid at 1-800-322-3223 or 1-800-465-1212 so that there will be an official record that will help track of each and any issue.

National Grid is currently building a small truck to be stored permanently on the island. They are working with DPW with regards to storage.

Someone asked about the cost of locating the wires underground. It would be cost prohibitive and it takes longer to get those lines repaired. National Grid understands the unique issues Prudence Island has.

Someone asked if there was any research into adding a wind turbine or solar panels to help alleviate the strain on the grid. The Town is not looking into a wind turbine and someone contacted the Town with possibly adding solar to the island but nothing formal has been submitted and would not hear anything for at least another year.

You can go to the National Grid website to look into energy audits to make your home more energy efficient and to swap out current lightbulbs with LED lights.

3. Discussion – Prudence Island Community Wildfire Protection Plan. – Onley Knight, RI DEM Division of Forest Environment Forest Fire Program Coordinator and Alex Entrup, Northeast Forest and Fire Management LLC explains the Prudence Island Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The goal of the plan is to create a strategic plan that identifies wildland fire risks facing the community and a summary of recommendations, such as the implementation of wildfire focused trainings, modernize firefighting apparatus, improve water supply in order to decrease refill times and increase water availability, develop fire department policies and procedures specific to wildland fires, decrease fire danger to community through fuel and hazard mitigation and to reduce structural ignitibility through Firewise®. The full report is available for download at <http://nbnerr.org> or on the Town website under the link attached to the agenda for this meeting.

4. Discussion – Transfer Station Rules and Procedures. – Mr. Woodhead discussed the closure of the leaf drop off and that it had been moved into the Transfer Station so that it could be monitored better. People were dropping trash into the drop off. The mattress/box spring fee is going up to \$70.00. Please call prior to coming to the mainland to drop them off. ECO-Depot will be cutting Portsmouth and Prudence Island as locations this year. There are upcoming events in Newport and Tiverton. Recycling flyers have been left if people have questions.

Having 2 hours on Saturdays and Sundays at the Transfer Station is not enough time, citizens would like more hours to be available. The money from the orange bags goes to defraying the cost of the stickers and tipping fees keep increasing. We have increased the recycling numbers from approximately 21% to 46% since the Pay as You Throw program has gone into effect.

Residents also would like the Town to pay for a dumpster during the Fireman's Fair. A resident stated that the Town does not consider Prudence Island in their decision making with regards to the Transfer Station and its rules. Residents can contact either Ray Antaya, the Solid Waste/Recycling Coordinator, or Ted Peitz, the head of the Solid Waste/Recycling Committee, regarding possible rule changes at the Transfer Station.

With regards to bunkers being broken into and trash being dumped, the property is under DEM control and they maintain the property.

5. Discussion – Medical Emergency Distribution Point of Dispensing on Prudence Island. – Mr. Talipsky explained what the Medical Emergency Distribution System (MEDS) and the Point of Dispensing (POD) is on Prudence Island. The purpose is to provide citizens with medications or vaccinations in the event of a mass medical emergency. The National Center for Disease Control has national stockpiles of certain vaccines hidden across the country. The medication is free to everyone and no identification or residency status is need. There is a POD location at the Portsmouth High School. They are looking to set up a location at the Union Church so that residents do not have to go off island. Volunteers are needed to help with the dispensing of medicine if needed. The Town receives \$675.00 for having a briefing here at this meeting.

6. Open Forum for Discussion and Q & A for Prudence Island Issues. –

Ed “Hap” Aldrich, Chairman of the Prudence Island Planning Commission, wanted everyone to be aware of how much the relationship as Chair of the Prudence Island Planning Commission and the Town Administrator has dramatically improved and has been simplified over the years. Mr. Rainer is available by phone, email, personal phone or to be able to just walk into his office to bring forward actions concerning Prudence Island.

Mr. Sheehan feels that Portsmouth needs to start figuring out what it means for Prudence to be part of Portsmouth. He feels that the Council does not seem to represent them. There is a log jam between Portsmouth and Bristol and it seems to not be going in any direction. It must go to the next level whatever that is, if there even is a next level or should it go to the State. There is no parking for Prudence and they are back to zero.

Senator Seveney asked what Mr. Sheehan's specific questions are and both he and Representative Donovan will try to get them answered, but is not sure that they will. Representative Donovan is a Bristol resident, has a slip at the marina and there is not parking for all who have slips at the marina.

Fred Stevenson had questions about the Short-term rental ordinance. It is on the website and properties are required to register. There will be a host compliance company that will be

matching up houses advertised on social media with those that are registered with the Town to see if they follow the ordinance. If they have not registered or are not in compliance they will be notified per the ordinance. The RFP is to be written shortly. This is still a work in progress and will continue to be tweaked along the way.

Prudence Island Volunteer Fire Department's Fire Chief is now Chief Dragon and Portsmouth's new chief is Chief Ford.

Mr. Gleason thanks Prudence Island for hosting the meetings. He and Mr. Hamilton have been in attendance for at least 5 years.

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

Sep 24 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting  
Oct 9 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting (Tuesday)  
Oct 22 7:00 PM - Town Council Meeting

**ADJOURN** – Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Kesson seconded by Dr. Ryan. Motion passed 6-0. Ms. Pedro was absent.

Time: 2:35 PM

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Jennifer M. West, Town Clerk