

Minutes of Isle au Haut 911 Addressing Ordinance Public Hearing

Held Thursday, July 7, 2016 at 8:00 PM at Revere Memorial Hall

The public hearing was Chaired by Robert Gerber, Chairman of the Planning Board

In Attendance: Bob Gerber, Marion Breeze-Williams, Charlie Hopkins, Donna Hopkins, Meghan Cooper, Marie Hamly, Kendra Chubbuck, John DeWitt, Brenda Clark, Bob Olney, Lolie Millspaugh, Alex Millspaugh, Peggi Stevens, George Cole, Alison Richardson

The public hearing was opened by Planning Board Chair Bob Gerber at 8:00 PM.

Bob Gerber explained the ordinance and how it originated. Because the Town of Isle au Haut lacks formal physical addresses, several residents have had trouble with retailers and public utilities, including TDS, recognizing given addresses as legitimate. Additionally, a lack of consistent physical addresses linked to the 911 emergency communication system could make it more difficult for emergency responders to find the address for which they are looking.

The Emergency Services Communication Bureau of the Maine Public Utilities Commission oversees the Enhanced 911 system. When someone calls 9-1-1 on their phone, the dispatchers (our dispatchers are located at the Knox County Emergency Management Agency) can also access information on the caller's location.

Bob Gerber sent the Public Utilities Commission a draft of the Isle au Haut 911 map that he prepared along with a spreadsheet of the addresses assigned. The PUC indicated that the draft could be approved as it was, but Bob felt that the town should weigh in first on the naming of the streets.

The 911 Addressing Ordinance would approve the map of physical addresses and create rules for how new addresses and street names would be assigned or changed in the future.

There is some flexibility for municipalities to exercise discretion as to which driveways (long driveways, for example) could be considered roads. Bob Gerber is allowing homeowners a little freedom in this regard if they want their own driveway to have a distinct road name.

It was asked how the 911 system actually works with these addresses. When someone calls 911, EMS will be able to identify the address from which the call originates with GPS coordinates. Locally, homeowners should put readable house numbers in a location visible from the road, either on their house or on a sign out by the road from which their road branches from.

There was some concern about how the residents of Isle au Haut will learn the new numbers and addresses. There will be a handout or flyer to help with information distribution. It will be provided to all residents and mailed out with next year's tax bills. It is recommended that

residents keep a copy of this list of new addresses by their phone and/or in another easily-accessible location.

It was asked what department or agency in the state government approves this. The Public Utilities Commission has to approve the final list/map. There is no variance or appeals process.

There has already been some discussion between Bob Gerber and residents about which streets and driveways are considered streets, as well as what their names should be.

Bob Gerber reviewed the contents of the ordinance. If approved, it would become effective in September 2017. The system may actually go in effect well before then, but it will take time to notify residents and for them to get the numbers on their houses or driveways and make the address changes with utilities and other parties with whom they do business.

Bob Gerber reviewed the current suggested street names. There were some suggestions for changes.

It was asked what addresses residents should give currently, particularly to TDS. Bob Gerber hopes that this new map with new addresses will be finalized by the end of September, at which point residents can begin to use the new addresses.

The Chair noted that the record will remain open for 30 days for the submission of written comments.

There being no further comments or questions, the hearing was officially declared closed at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Meghan Cooper
Reviewed and approved by Robert Gerber, Chairman