Rockport and Camden Select Boards
Joint Meeting
June 6, 2016

Camden Town Office
Select Board Meeting Room
(Washington Street Conference Room)

Minutes

Present:
Camden: Select Board Members: Chair John French and Members, Don White, Leonard Lookner, Martin Cates, James Heard, and Town Manager Pat Finnigan.

Rockport: Select Board Members: Chair William Chapman and Members Tracy Murphy, Ken McKinley, Geoff Parker, Owen Casas, and Rockport Town Manager Rick Bates.

Also present were several citizens

Chairs John French and William Chapman called their respective boards to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. Rockport Chair Bill Chapman stated that Rockport Police Chief Mark Kelly had notified the Town that after 20 years as Police Chief, he had decided to retire. The Select Board and Town Manager discussed how they should proceed with filling that position. After discussing that, they agreed that this would be a good time to approach Camden to see if the Select Board would be interested in sharing a Police Chief and ask Camden Police Chief Randy Gagne to serve as the
interim Chief.

Town Manager Rick Bates and Town Manager Pat Finnigan said they had met to discuss whether sharing the Chief would be possible. They said they thought the timing was good and having a joint Chief was worth exploring. Chief Gagne said that he had grown up in Rockport and knew the community. He said he would be visible in the community and accessible to the police officers, Select Board members, Town Managers, and citizens. He said the two Towns already have a mutual aid agreement and he and the Camden police officers would be happy to help as needed.

The two Select Boards discussed coverage and staffing issues, as well as opportunities for the two departments to cross train during this interim period. After discussion, the two boards agreed that they should try this for six months; the agreement could be extended if the arrangement was working for both departments and the communities. They also agreed that Chief Gagne should do a status report after Labor Day so the Boards would know how the arrangement was working. Camden Select Board Member Jim Heard said he hoped the interim period would continue beyond six months. Rockport Select Board member Geoff Parker said he thought that we should take things slowly and work on building the relationship. Camden Select Board Chair John French said that he thought sharing the Police Chief and working together had merit and would be positive for both communities. He said it was important to take a slow and steady approach, and give the officers the opportunity to cross train and work together.

The Board discussed additional questions such as whether the two Departments could share an administrative assistant, and a parking officer.

John French asked what the staffing level was now and whether there were any vacancies. Rick Bates responded there was one position open, not counting the Chief. Leonard Lookner asked who hire officers for the Rockport Police Dept. Rick Bates said that as Chief, Randy Gagne would make the hiring decision, with the approval of the Town Manager.

Tracy Murphy suggested that the Chief should check in with the Select Boards after Labor Day to update the Boards and the community and evaluate how the arrangement was working.
Ken McKinley said he hoped this arrangement would allow opportunities for professional advancement for the officers.

Board members also suggested that the two departments should establish goals and milestones they should accomplish, as well as keeping track of response times.

Motion:
For the Rockport Select Board: Ken McKinley made a motion to have the Town Manager's bring an Interlocal Agreement to each Board prior to July 1. Tracy Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 to 0.

For the Camden Board, Leonard Lookner made the same motion, which was seconded by Martin Cates. The motion passed 5 to 0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Finnigan, Camden Town Manager