

FYI – Fellow Residents of Isle La Motte

It is my understanding Rusty Spaulding has circulated a letter which I feel has some misinformation about several articles in the 2022 Annual Town Meeting Warning:

Article 5. Shall the legal voters of the Town vote to mail the annual town report to the voters ten (10) days before the annual Town Meeting. Many voters feel that for transparency and to keep all voters informed our Town Reports should be mailed to all voters/households. Currently 125 copies are printed at a cost of \$625 plus \$96 for postcard notification equals \$721. If all 464 voters/240 households received a copy of the Annual Report, the printing costs would increase \$547.75 and postage \$566.40 or a total increase of \$1,114.15 over what is budgeted / spent currently. Mr. Spaulding misrepresents the actual costs for printing & mailing reports to voter households by calculating each VOTER getting a report mailed to them versus what had traditionally occurred prior to 2010 when one report was mailed to households with multiple voters. Currently our Town Clerk mails post card notifications to voters/households (not each voter) telling us when the Annual Report is available. Mr. Spaulding also states incorrectly “Town Reports are not forwarded to Islanders who are away for the winter and are discarded by the Post Office.” Confirming with the ILM Postmaster, Town Reports are sent by First Class postage, will be forwarded to recipient if out of town, and will be returned to the Town Offices if undeliverable. Furthermore, the Town Reports for both 2020 and 2021 are not on the Town’s website. The post card notification states the ability to read the report on-line, yet it is not available. Our Town generously appropriates thousands of dollars to non-profits every year. An investment of \$1,114.15 within our own community allows voters the ability to read, digest, and discuss their thoughts before voting. This is a small price to pay for having the privilege to vote.

Article 6. Shall the Isle LaMotte Selectboard, and other Town public bodies, approve the use of technology that permits the public attendance at all meetings, through electronic means (i.e. Zoom). Most public meetings are now being held by electronic means, i.e., Zoom, Google Meets, Teams, etc. What electronic meetings do is keep people safe during this pandemic; enable people to participate in meetings without physically being there; review/watch recorded meetings when people have the time to do so at their leisure; review a particular part of a dialog that took place during a meeting; or to verify what was said and by whom it was said, and to question what happened at a meeting. In the January 12 – January 18 Islander, So. Hero announced “it was investing \$999 on new audio-visual equipment that will improve public access to virtual government meetings held over Zoom.” During a discussion at the 01.03.2022 Selectboard meeting, a resident of Isle La Motte in attendance offered to “write a check that day” for the necessary equipment to conduct effective Zoom meetings. Our Select Board was not interested, even though it was FREE! This begs to ask “WHY”?

If you have questions, please contact me: Barbara Callahan - callahanra@aol.com – 928-3248