

Strafford Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday May 10, 2023 6 pm
Town Office 227 Justin Morrill Hwy, Strafford Vermont 05072

Members participants in person: Rod Sloat, Jeff Solsaa, David Paganelli, John Freitag, Brian Johnson

Other participants in person: Paul Hardy, Sue Coburn, Phoebe Mix, John Echeverria

Other participants by zoom: Stephen Willbanks, Rocky Fuller, Roberta Robinson, Tom Cecere, David Webb

Meeting called to order at 6pm. Reading of Guidelines for Selectboard Conduct

Public Concerns – no public concerns

Reviewed and all approved minutes of April 26 meeting with a correction to Ryan Kennedy's pay before the recent increase.

Highways

Road Foreman P.D. Hardy gave update on current conditions of roads and equipment. Stress the need to find a road crew member to fill open vacancy and another member to fill vacancy when Danny Prescott retires.

A motion was made, seconded and all approved of signing a contract with Pike signed for paving Rte. 132 from South Strafford village to Thetford Town line.

PD discussed ditching work and possible culvert replacement. Project intended to preserve and save this stretch of road. Discussed the possibility of getting federal infrastructure money to do extensive rebuild but that is only a possibility and even if obtained would be a few years out and work is needed on that road now.

The State bridge inspector sent a report this week showing that Bridge #16 on Mundel Road in Taylor Valley is in need of some immediate repair and replacement. Solsaa will talk with engineer and see if he can arrange a site visit to better understand what needs to be done on short and long term.

Contractor Jeremy Kendall will be asked to do immediate repairs.

Bridge #30

The Board reviewed the letter of intent for the \$300,000 Transportation Alternative Grant received by the Town for the re-use of trusses on Bridge #30 on the Brook Road near the Town House. Freitag shared notes from his and Solsaa's zoom meeting with State highway officials regarding the project. The Selectboard last October "endorsed the concept of refurbishing Bridge 30 using the Ludlow trusses providing it can be done at a fair and reasonable price to the town and its taxpayers." In order for this to happen, another grant of \$300,000 from the Northern Borders Commission will be needed. Whether the Town will get this grant will not be known until October 1. According to the State officials, preliminary paper work will take until then. Bridge construction would likely not happen until 2026. The State is aware that this project is dependent on getting other grant money and the Town has the option, should the Northern Borders grant not come through, of withdrawing from the TAP grant. A motion was made, seconded and all approved of signing the letter of intent for the TAP grant.

Sale of Town Properties

There is a small triangle of land the Town owns on Miller Pond road near the junction of Sawney Bean road which was created years ago when the road was moved to its present location. It does not

currently have a deed in order to be sold. It was moved, seconded and all approved having a survey be made of the property in order that a deed may be created and the property put on the market.

Grant updates

The Town received a \$4,000 Municipal Energy Resilience Program Mini-Grant. It will be used to help with writing a grant for insulating and doing energy upgrades at the Town Garage. The Town Energy and Climate Committee is willing to work with Jeff Grout, our shared with other towns energy consultant on this and Freitag will serve as the Selectboard point person on this project.

The Town received a \$4,000 grant from David Taplin for tree removal and planting on the common. The Board will send a letter of thanks.

The Town received a \$7,470 "REDI Multi-Project grant to help with grant exploration and writing for the Town Office project. Freitag is the point person on this grant and its implementation.

Town Office Committee update

Rocky Fuller and David Paganelli informed the Board that the survey of a sliver of land that Susan Cloke had intended to give to the Town to help make needed additional land available to meet zoning requirements found the land likely to belong to Phoebe Mix. Another sliver of land has been identified and an agreement to use this is being pursued. Rocky expressed the discouragement felt by the Town Office Committee at not being able to move forward in a timely way. David Paganelli is doing the follow-up with Susan.

Preservation Trust of Vermont – Meet-Up Day

There was an update on this June 6 event that will take place in the Town House.

1st Quarter Budget review – was tabled to the next meeting so Town Clerk/ Town Treasurer Lisa Bragg could participate.

The Selectboard all voted to approved a request from the Listers to have a 30 day extension on filing the Grand list

The Selectboard all voted to approve the annual Town Garage Storm Water Agreement

Correspondence

Sue Coburn, Treasurer of the South Royalton Senior Center, which oversees the Barrett Hall Senior meal site, wrote an email and came to the Board meeting regarding a mistake in the Town budget that left the Senior Center with \$1,000 less than they requested. There is money budgeted for misc. expenses that can be used to cover this oversight and it was moved, seconded and all approved to adjust the amount given to the South Royalton Senior Center an additional \$1,000.

Steve Willbanks – wrote and came to the meeting to request that the storage container, at the Town Park and Ride which has the Strafford Historical Society belonging be allowed to stay there an additional year while work is being done on their building. A motion was made, seconded and all approved to allow the storage container to stay until July 1, 2024 .

The Board reviewed and a response to an email from Mr. Breese.

Other

The Board approved paying Ed Eastman to install and set up the new speed indication sign before the Fire House in the Upper village. Road crew will put in the post on which it is to be located.

The Board approved having Solsaa be a contact with the Valley News regarding an article on the Mine and the Stanley property.

The Board approved the purchase of a computer for the Grant Manager and put off the purchase of a computer for use in the office till the next meeting.

The Board put off review of a bill for police services till the next meeting.

Motion made, seconded and all approved to adjourn at 8:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,
John Freitag