

Selectboard Meeting May 22, 2019

Board members present: Brian Johnson, Kate Siepman, Toni Pippy, Pat Kelly, Lauri Berkenkamp

Others present:

Lisa Bragg, Town Clerk; Jon MacKinnon; Kerry Claffey; Gil Robertson; Curt Albee; Tom Root; Tom Bachman, architect; Jennifer Brown for *The Herald of Randolph*.

Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Citizen Concerns:

Kerry Claffey wanted to let the town know that the wall behind the bridge near his house is falling down because of the poor drainage from pipes (which were installed in 1912). The road crew extended the pipe recently as a short-term fix, but the project is complicated and extensive, and entails historic walls. The first step will be to get a bridge inspection. Jon MacKinnon and Toni are investigating funding and grant options for the project.

Highways and Equipment Update:

General: there are still soft spots on some roads. The crew is working hard to put gravel on these roads and grade others. Jon will put the crack sealant out to bid in the next couple of weeks.

- a. Asset management of paved roads. Todd Eaton is working with Toni and Jon on this inventory. Todd will provide recommendations on a road-by-road basis.
- b. FY 21 capital projects prioritization. Toni, Jon and John Echeverria are working on getting priority projects on the list.
- c. Road crew vacancy: the town has received 2 applications. Jon will meet with Brian (road crew liaison) to discuss.
- d. Proposal for input of data for the road crew worksheets database for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019. The town has been collecting information about how roads have been maintained for the past several years, but the only way to get information about the work done by the crews is to go through time sheets. Courtney Hardy has presented a proposal to the selectboard to enter the data for those years into a database for \$1162.50. This money would come out of the town clerk's budget for the entry of the backlogged data, although Courtney will be employed by the selectboard, not the town clerk. The board will determine how to ensure that the information is kept up to date once the backlog has been updated. Motion was made, seconded, and approved to hire Courtney to do this work for a one-time fee.
- e. FEMA. Jon presented a list of projects to be reimbursed by FEMA due to the April 14 rain event. The town has six places on five roads (2 spots on Justin Morrill Highway, 1 on Kibling Hill Road, 1 on Robinson Road, 1 on Stage Road, and multiple spots on Downer Forest Road) that will be submitted for FEMA natural disaster reimbursement. The road crews are currently working on repairing the roads.

Correspondence

Email from Ed Hathaway re: Elizabeth Mine 5-Year Review. The board received a questionnaire from the EPA regarding issues concerning the activities at the mine. The board reviewed the questions; Toni will respond to the EPA.

Email from J. Jespersen re: car at the park and ride. Board acknowledged receipt of email and answered.

Correspondence from census re: new home construction in town. Board acknowledged receipt of letter. Toni will discuss this with Tim Denny.

Approve minutes of May 8 meeting

Board moved, seconded, and approved minutes of the May 8 meeting.

Town Office Improvement Proposal

Town Office restoration committee presented a draft proposal to the board to restore the town office. The group provided history of the building (it was originally given to the town by Justin Morrill in 1883 as a library), which is in dire need of major renovation. There have been proposals for repairs since 2002 without any major work actually accomplished, including handicap access, electrical issues, deterioration of interior and exterior, etc. The most significant repairs have been repairing the slate roof through a grant, installing a generator, insulating the vault through a grant, removing the rugs and sanding the floor, and repairing and then replacing the septic system.

The rough scope of work to restore the office will include providing a handicap-accessible bathroom and access to the second floor via an enclosed stairwell in addition to major repairs to the front porch, true handicap accessibility to the building, adding 100 square feet (for the accessible bathroom), removing the exterior stairs and side porch (and side door); converting the second-floor door to an egress window, new storm panels on all the windows. The interior work would include removing walls and fixing floors; framing and painting new walls; removing the dropped ceiling; removing paneling and plaster on exterior walls in order to spray foam for insulation; all plumbing for new bathroom; new lighting and power distribution throughout the building; new HVAC equipment for heating, A/C, and ventilation.

The committee said that renovations to the existing interior would comply with the historic nature of the building and the original buildout. There is no requirement for 2 exits in the building. Discussion ensued regarding the proposed layout of the building and the expenses. Total estimated cost for the renovation will run approximately \$400,000. For comparison, the architect said that a new building of comparable size would cost approximately \$300 per square foot (not including septic, site work, etc.).

The committee suggested that the funding for the renovation could be considered as 1/3 grant-funded, 1/3 donation-funded, and 1/3 tax-funded. The one-year tax increase would amount to a .73 tax increase, which would mean \$146.20 on a \$200,000 house. This could be extended over more than one year.

The board asked how long the project would take. The committee estimate approximately 5-6 months for completion. The committee said the project could be reduced by up to \$50,000 with volunteer labor for demolition.

The town office would have to rent a mobile unit for work while the project is going on. This would add about \$1,000 per month. All records in the vault will stay. Much discussion ensued regarding the cost of the project, how to fund the project, and what next steps could be, including research into how other towns have funded their municipal office renovations and/or construction.

The board agreed to have a structural engineer come into the building to do a structural analysis (this money is already in the budget). The committee will do research into the funding options and mechanisms.

A draft of the proposed plans for renovation will be available for public viewing at the town office. The board will hold a public informational meeting regarding the project in the near future, after the structural engineer has done an analysis and the committee has researched funding and financing options. The committee will meet again and report to the board at the June 26 selectboard meeting.

Review Personnel Policy

Board reviewed the vacation policy and noted that employees should be filling out a form to request paid time off. Board is considering modifying the vacation policy to ensure that all employees take adequate vacation time over the course of the year. Board will discuss this again at a later date.

Liaison Update

- a. Rec Board has received a request from the Men's Mountain League Softball league to book the Varney Field at 4 p.m. on Sundays and at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays from June 9 to August 14. The rec board has some concerns about tying up town facilities for out of town use and asked the selectboard to weigh in. The board moved, seconded, and voted to accept the request with a one-time \$50 deposit.
- b. VCRD 4 Towns. Toni and Kate attended the task force meeting. Toni is on the steering committee.
- c. Kate will attend the Downtown and Historic Preservation Conference on Wednesday, June 5, 2019.

Other Business

Update on Vermont state environmental board appeal: Lisa reported that the environmental board needed proof that the selectboard appointed Terry Garrison as our representative, which she did.

Dog licenses: The board received a list of unlicensed dogs. Janet Hardy has been contacting people to get their dogs licensed, but the people on the list have not yet complied. The board has the authority to impound any dog that does not have a current license. Please note there is a \$20 late fee for each unlicensed dog.

No further business.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauri Berkenkamp
Recording Clerk