

**Stafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 6:00 pm via Zoom

Members participating: Toni Pippy, Patrik Kelly, Rett Emerson, Jeff Solsaa, Mary Linehan

Others participating: John Freitag, Michael Stoffel, JT Horn, Katrina DeCoff-Webster, Josh Kahan, Kevin Gish, Roz Finn, Jon McKinnon, Rod Maclay, Hilary Linehan

Meeting started 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns

- John Freitag suggested volunteers be used to conduct work on Town office issues.
- Michael Stoffel and Roz Finn raised concerns about speeding in town. Liaison noted that in the past there have been lots of problems with speeding, and that the County Sheriff has advised that there is not much that can be done beyond periodic monitoring. Speed bumps and other obstructions are not practical for snow and other road maintenance reasons. More reminders may be appropriate, and an additional flashing current speed sign to be placed near the school; cost is app. \$3,000. Constable can move the existing sign as needed, and more closely monitor speed of vehicles near the school.

2. Emergency Management COVID 19 – Governor Phil Scott and State Officials Announce the Vermont Forward Plan Roadmap to Reopening. All details are at [www.vermont.gov/vermont-forward](http://www.vermont.gov/vermont-forward).

3. Town Highways and Equipment Update

- Foreman reports that equipment is working fine, mud season is particularly challenging, and they are working hard to keep up with the sink holes.
- Jon McKinnon has served on the Highway crew for 30 years as of April 15. The Selectboard thanks him for his service and leadership and presented him with a plaque commemorating his excellent service to the town.
- a. Highway Correspondence:
  - David Paganelli, RE: Request to access permit at the Ashley Community Forest. Road crew is not able to make a decision without further information despite a visit to the proposed site. Access permit will be required to provide information to the highway department to provide guidance.
  - Liaison has notified Mike Hebb that an access permit is required to approve trailhead parking on Alger Brook Road.

4. General Correspondence

- Email updates from the State Emergency Operations Center Situation Reports, re: COVID-19, Vermont Department of Health, The Office of the Governor, TRORC and VLTC
- John Smeltzer, Environmental Analyst, VT Dept of Environmental Conservation RE: Stanley Property. Stanley family members are not interested in the property, which may result in a tax sale of the property. Clean-up of the site may be expensive and a deterrent to purchase.

- Geoff Martin, TRORC Strafford Energy Progress Report Card and IREC March 2021 Progress Report.
  - Michael Stoffel, RE: Speeding in the town of South Strafford.
  - John Freitag, RE: making the best of limited resources
  - Office of the Governor, RE: Governor Phil Scott, Senator Bernie Sanders announce Summer Enrichment Program for Vermont Youth. Chair attended the meeting and reported that funds are anticipated for youth activities in the coming months.
  - Chris Recchia, Managing Director, ValleyNet, RE: ECFiber Strafford Hub.
  - Roy Mercon, Mercon Photo, LLC, RE: Coming to visit/fly. VLCT has clarified that FAA regulations will need to be followed. Chair will send a letter to Mr. Mercer
  - Peter Fellows, TRORC, RE: wi-fi hot spot donation opportunity
  - Kate Siepmann, RE: Historic treasures. Ledger found in the Town Office, and which has been reviewed by the Strafford Historical Society, has been returned to the town vault. Town Clerk noted that such documents are available to the public for viewing.
  - Will Cooney, RE: resigning position on SCC (Strafford Conservation Commission)
5. Motion passed to approve minutes of the March 24 regular meeting.
  6. Ashley Forest updates. Pat Kelly provided an update on discussions with the town of Sharon regarding how to work together. Key areas of agreement: Each town will own their own land parcels; towns would try to manage the property as a unified forest; the towns would treat expenses and income as shared and equal for the benefit of both towns. Next stage will be to work on the details of the conservation easements. Interlocal agreement considerations: who is on the board; what is its mandate; and how will funds be managed. Consensus that the ACF should be self-sustaining, and not request funding from the town budgets. Selectboard encouraged a more streamlined document limited to a description of how the two towns will work together, and clarification of steps to include other community groups (recreation, historical and education committees), perhaps expand the board to include broader representation. Town Clerk noted that all funds will need to be managed by town treasurers. Sharon will be voting on May 8 whether to acquire the land, and the team is mindful that until that decision is made, no commitments can be made. JT Horn will follow up regarding the finance plan for the proposed parking lot.
  7. Local Emergency Management Plan review and approve. Josh Kahan presented the annually updated Emergency Management Plan for action by the Selectboard. Modifications were requested to identify Rett Emerson and Jeff Solsaa as Road Crew liaisons. Pat Kelly and Mary Linehan as operations support. Motion passed to sign the adoption form for 2021.
  8. Town Office
    - Jeff Solsaa conducted a review of the current urgent repairs needed and estimates \$35,000-40,000 will be needed for urgent issues, including unsafe stairs, front load-bearing posts are rotted and loose, front stoop is collapsing, side roof is close to falling off, exterior painting is urgent, and needs to be assessed for lead content. May be necessary to close the upstairs to use due to safety considerations. Jeff will prepare a written list of items and a more detailed cost estimate.

- Mary Linehan presented an illustrative timeline for initiating planning for the Town Office. Selectboard will propose a committee at the next board meeting to move forward.
9. ECFiber Strafford Hub move. Pat Kelly noted that the Town Office has virtually no land to host this hub, and ECFiber needs to be very clear about the space limitations. Any questions about the proposed lease should be shared with Chair; Paul Gillies will review the proposed lease.
  10. Zoning District Map and town plan description refinement. Planning commission wants to complete this task in May; Chair will follow up with TRORC to obtain guidance to refine and complete the plan.
  11. Liaison updates
    - Murray Field usage request. Motion passed for PTA plant sale to use Murray field on May 15, all day including set up and clean up. In the case of rain, the event will take place on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Recreation-skatepark. Recreation Board would like to set up a temporary test site for skateboarding at the Park & Ride. The rec board is also interested in identifying a long-term site, potentially near the soccer field or at Murray Field/recycling center. Looking for guidance from SB on an appropriate site for a paved skatepark of 20'x40'. Chair raised insurance concerns; liaison reported that based on earlier discussions, there might be a slight increase in insurance. Motion passed to allow temporary use of the back portion of the Park & Ride for a skateboard park until the end of September 2021, pending confirmation of insurance coverage.
    - Green Up Day, 5/1/21, organized by Rebecca Bailey, who has graciously offered to do it.
  12. Other
    - Thursday, April 15 Road Foreman will be conducting site visits for potential contractors interested in bidding on road work. Both highway grants have been posted.
    - Town clerk has applied for a 2% loan for the new truck, for a potential savings of \$3,000.
    - Selectboard appreciates the efforts by commissions and boards to share meeting notifications, minutes and documents.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan  
Recording Clerk