

Strafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 28, 2022, 6:00 pm at Town Office
227 Justin Morrill Hwy, Strafford, 05072

Members participating: Toni Pippy, Jeff Solsaa, Brian Johnson, Mary Linehan (via zoom), David Paganelli (via zoom)

Other participants in person: Lisa Bragg

Via zoom: Marcia Bushnell, Curt Albee, Rocky Fuller

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns. Marcia Bushnell thanked the Selectboard and Road Crew for their great work during the recent storm.
2. Highway. Jeff Solsaa reported on the status of highway operations.
 - a. Roads and equipment. Road Crew worked very hard during the storms and did a great job, plowing and sanding through the nights. Shawn Ward also assisted.
 - b. Jeff and PD Hardy are coordinating to follow up on a candidate that has applied for the open position.
 - c. The radar signs have been received, and the cross walks signs have been ordered.
 - d. Eric Thorp has agreed to assess the cost of cleaning up at the Stanley property.
 - e. Chris Bump requested a rough estimate of the cost of the storm damage for possible FEMA relief funds. Jason Schumacher will be asked to follow up. Jeff suggested that some funding be made available to cut trees in the right of way, that will likely fall on power lines. David clarified that any tree that will likely fall on a power line is the responsibility of GMP. Dangerous trees that will fall in the road are the responsibility of the town. Discussion re how to notify GMP.
 - f. Jeff requested that we invite the Orange County Sheriff to come in and talk about patrolling and other services. Brian will contact the new Sheriff in January.
3. Approve the minutes of the 12/14/22 regular meeting. Toni, Jeff and Mary voted to accept the minutes of the 12/14/22 regular meeting. David and Brian opposed.
4. Debrief town response to the last two storms that left many without power. Road Crew work that was done to clear the roads from the debris. Chair thanked Jason Schumacher, EMD, for the response during the recent storms and power outage. Jason reported on the additional plans that he implemented for the second storm. Chair noted some changes that need to be made to the Emergency Plan, including updating contact phone numbers, the value of notifying the community where warming centers will be in advance of an impending event (if possible). Jason described the CARE list (Citizens Assistance Registry for Emergencies) <https://e-991.vermont.gov/care> designed to register vulnerable community members in a disaster. Jason confirmed that there is a supply of MREs, cots and other supplies in stock. Received great support from the Newton School staff and residents who reached out to help, and coordinated with the Road Crew. Noted that his major take-away is that during extensive, prolonged power outages, communication is the most challenging issue (internet and phone services were down all over town), and he ended up using a generator at his home to manage communications. Jason raised the issue of whether emergency shelter facilities would be open to non-residents. Barrett Hall generator was not working; Town Clerk clarified that maintenance of the generator is the

responsibility of the Barrett Hall trustees. The Tyson Gym ended up being a suitable, and preferable emergency shelter, but does not have an ADA compliant bathroom on both floors.

5. Town Office Committee update. Curt Albee presented the estimate for the cost of the proposed renovation of the Town Office building, summarized as: Itemized construction costs: \$823,155; Estimating contingency @ 15%: \$123,473; GC mark-up at 10%: \$ 94,663; Bond @ 1.5%: \$15,619; Total \$1,056,910. Curt estimates an additional 30% required for “soft costs” for architect and engineer fees and additional structural repairs, civil engineer to address drainage issues, owners’ costs, which would increase the estimate to: \$1,373,983. Additional costs that have not yet been estimated include un-defined costs of the purchase of .06 acres, financing costs, and costs for temporary housing of Town Office staff during the renovation. Tom Bachman recommends hiring a construction manager, potentially using a cost plus fixed fee funding mechanism, which would include a 5% fee on the construction costs. Committee has reviewed the estimate line by line and will meet again to further discuss. Estimated to require 4-6 months to prepare the construction drawings, with a 12-month construction period. Discussion about the high cost of the project and funding options. The Committee will be further reviewing the estimated cost line items and will meet with Tom Bachman in the coming weeks to clarify outstanding questions.
6. 2023 Budget draft and 2022 review. Agenda item tabled till the Jan 4th special meeting dedicated to the budget. Chair provided update on her budget preparation activities. Discussion re budget line item for the Town Office, which is an existing approved budget line item that was created several years ago as reserve fund for repairs, maintenance and renovation as needed.
7. Grant administrator to assist with applications for the new federal grant programs. Discussion re skills, cost and level of effort required for writing and managing potential grants for highway, facilities renovation, and other projects.
8. Acknowledgement of Correspondence
 - Stephen Willbanks, RE: Stockmayer Parcel
 - U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration, Re: \$1.5 Billion Available through 2023 RAISE Grant Program – Now Accepting Applications.
9. Liaison Updates.
 - Steve Marx is willing to continue in his role as Health Officer. Chair made a motion to appoint Steve Marx as the Health Officer for the Town of Strafford, for a term of three years starting Jan 2023. Mary seconded. Unanimously approved.
10. Other. A special meeting of the Selectboard to discuss the budget will be held on Jan 4, 2023. The next regular meeting will be Jan. 11.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Recording Clerk