

Stafford Selectboard Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 27, 2023, 8:00am

Town Office, 227 Justin Morrill Hwy, Strafford Vermont 05072

Members participating: John Freitag, Brian Johnson, Jeff Solsaa, Rod Sloat and David Paganelli by zoom

The meeting was called to order at 8am.

1. Selectboard liaison Jeff Solsaa explained the value of having a second yolk rake to help fill in ruts in the road and dry out mud faster. The town currently has one, that is over 20 years old, pulled behind a truck and the one the highway department seeks to purchase would mount on the tractor. This equipment is most effective when used at night and Strafford has over 60 miles of gravel roads where it is needed. Jeff has searched out options to buy one. Due to the pandemic, they are in very short supply. Jeff will continue to look. Prices he came up with were in the range of \$5,500 to \$6,700. Selectboard member Rod Sloat asked where in budget this would come from. Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Lisa Bragg provided the information that there is a \$30,000 equipment line item in the budget. As per the new purchasing policy put in place in February to meet the standards needed to receive FEMA and other federal funds, a purchase of this size needs approval by the Board. To provide some flexibility and to avoid another Special Meeting, a motion was made and seconded to authorize spending up to \$8,000 on a yolk rake.

2. Fire Marshal's visit – Selectboard member Brian Johnson reported that he and contractor Jeremy Kendall met with the Fire Marshal on Thursday March 23 to go over violations at the Town Clerk Office. He said they went through step by step all that needed to be done. The downstairs of the office can meet compliance for now by some minor changes on the inside and replacement of the posts in the front of the building. (An old post will be saved as a template for eventual historic restoration). The access to the upstairs would require considerable expensive work. It was Brian and Jeremy's recommendation that the Town take the option the Fire Marshall gave of simply closing off and removing everything from upstairs. This has been made much more feasible by the offer of Lister Ross Gortner to use a room in his home for the Listers office. His home in South Strafford village is in a good location and with some minor modifications would work well. Rod pointed out we need to check with our insurance provider on coverage in the new location. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to have Selectboard Chair John Freitag continue to work with the Listers on a proposal to be presented at the next regular Board meeting on April 12.

John who was also at the site visit with the Fire Marshal, spoke on how the Fire Marshal recognized that work on a plan and financing the needed renovation and addition would address some of the larger concerns such as drainage and was willing to allow some time for this work as part of the larger project. The Fire Marshal did want to be kept updated on the progress and noted that there was limited time to deal with these larger issues.

3. John asked permission and the Board agreed to allow John to contact Phoebe Mix as to the possibility of using some space in the Brick Store for the Town Clerk during renovation of the Town Office should that be approved by the Town.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37am

Respectfully Submitted,

John Freitag, Temp Recording Clerk