

Strafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at 6:00 pm  
Strafford Town Office

Members participating: Brian Johnson, Toni Pippy, Jeff Solsaa, David Paganelli, Mary Linehan

Others participating: Lisa Bragg, John Freitag, Mike Hebb, Tom Eck, Bonnie Bergeron, Rocky Fuller

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.

Chair asked for a moment of silence to acknowledge deaths in Uvalde, TX. Brian Johnson has a new grandchild, Waylon Brian.

1. Public Concerns. None.
2. Highway.
  - a. Staffing: open position, clarification of PD's duties, Ryan's performance evaluation and hiring of temporary until open position is filled. No applications were received for the open position. A draft job description has been prepared and will be reviewed before it is finalized by the Selectboard. Ryan's performance evaluation has been prepared and awaits signatures. PD has arranged for the Road Crew to swap labor with Town of Thetford to reduce costs for hauling gravel, and reports that working with the Thetford Road Crew has been very productive and pleasurable.
  - b. Blaktop response to Rte. 132 paving concerns. Jeff reported that he called Blaktop representative, who said they fully intend to return to fix the deficiencies, especially the aprons and the center seam, but are delayed by lack of workers. Blaktop representatives will come out to meet with PD and Jeff to finalize a plan.
  - c. Job Description for Shop Foreman has been drafted and shared with Selectboard members for review and comments, to be finalized at the June 8 regular Selectboard meeting.
  - d. Blower grant and purchase. We will not go forward with the purchase due to increased price of the blower and Lisa will decline the grant.
  - e. Tyson Bridge put out to bid. One estimate has been received, but it is not clear that we have enough information to evaluate the bid. Lisa will post a tender for contract to paint the Tyson Bridge. Chair will review details provided by the EPA to determine the work that is required.
  - f. Justin Morrill Highway Bridge #23 grant what next? Proposals received to date are considered too expensive. Lisa will repost the tender for offers to try to get more affordable proposals.
  - g. Grants approved for Miller Pond Road and Old City Falls. Better Roads grant was received for Miller Pond Road work; we are waiting for the grant agreement to be executed for Old City Falls Road. Blue Mountain would like to proceed with the work for both roads to avoid coming out twice to Strafford, which is less efficient and will cause delays. Selectboard recognizes the efficiencies and advises that Blue Mountain start with Miller Pond Rd and delay initiating work on Old City Falls Rd until the award is finalized, likely by early July.
  - h. Approve mowing bid request. Town Clerk has prepared an Initiation for Bids for the 2022 season mowing for Town properties. Rocky Fuller presented concerns about how the Town

Hall property is mowed. Invitation to Bid will be amended to include consultation with THAG and will be posted on Friday.

- i. Jersey barriers or equivalent for skateboard array. Rec Board needs to set up a barrier in the park and ride to keep skateboards from shooting out into the street. Road Crew does not have jersey barriers, so the Rec Board has allocated some of its funds to set up an appropriate barrier. Road Crew remains available to advise about where to put the barrier and how to build a suitable barrier.
  - j. Mike Hebb requested that once the Town takes ownership of the Stanley property a notice is sent notifying the neighbors parking in the right of way. Brian Johnson will work with Mike on the parking issue.
3. Approve the minutes of the 5/7/22 Special, 5/11/22 Regular and 5/18/22 Special meetings. – 5 minutes. Motion passed to accept the May 7, 2022 minutes; Mary abstained due to absence. Motion passed to accept the May 11 minutes; Mary abstained due to absence. Approval of minutes of May 18, 2022 tabled until there is clarification of the 911 address for 35 Mine Road.
  4. O’Neil Property value by Bonnie Bergeron, Realtor with Martha E. Diebold Real Estate and do we put it up for sale. Bonnie reported that land and properties are selling quickly, and suggests that as a building site, the O’Neil property might be sold for a minimum of \$80,000. Tom Eck presented his interest in maintaining the right of ways included in his deed and may be interested in purchasing the property, and working with the Town on the sale issue. Mike Hebb expressed an interest in ensuring that the old Rte 132, which was reclassified as a trail, remains open for the Town trail access.
  5. Town Office – Stone Soup and feasibility studies are pending. Stone Soup is under contract with a June 30<sup>th</sup> closing date but is accepting back up offers. Discussion re feasibility studies, considerations for acquiring adequate land for expansion on the existing office site, steps required to determine how to proceed, clarification of size of Smith lot.
  6. Budget to date review. Chair reports that projection is that we will be over app \$145,000 on the Highway budget due to mud season damage, and ARPA funds will be used to cover the costs. Additionally, gas and oil costs are higher than previous years, due to increased cost and increased vehicle use resulting from the on-going road repair work. The General fund budget is on track. AOT has confirmed that we have received a \$200,000 paving grant for Miller Pond for next year.
  7. Acknowledgement of Correspondence.
    - a. Mike Hebb, RE: What to do...?
    - b. Matthew Barnes, RE: Van Dyke Grade
    - c. John Freitag, RE: Mud season in review – what would it take to do better: by Li Shin, May 8, 2022
    - d. Kip Lindsay, RE: Ash Trees
    - e. Hilary Linehan, RE: rec board minutes for 5/9/22 meeting and request for skateboard barriers
    - f. Mike Scanlon, RE: Change to glass recycling
    - g. Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development, RE: Housing Conference, June 8<sup>th</sup>,
    - h. Jennifer Grace, VT Retirement, RE: VMERS defined benefit rates FY2023 and beyond

8. Liaison Updates.
  - Planning Commission still has 2 vacancies. Lisa will re-advertise. Planning commission is seeking review from TRORC for the housing portion of the Town Plan.
  - Chair has responded to Jason Schumacher to speak with TRORC to use the approved grant (May 20, 2022) for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Development Committee.
9. Junk Yards. Brian has not been able to contact Lisa Coburn. Pixley residence on Brook Road has been identified as a junk yard and will notified of the violation.
10. Other.
  - a. Sign Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP). Motion passed to sign the LEMP.
  - b. Sign Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) Agreement for recycling adjustment for handling glass. Motion passed to sign the NRRA agreement.
  - c. Motion passed to sign the Agreement for Services with TRORC to assist with the LEMP.
  - d. Sign the Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator Service Agreement (IREC). Motion passed to sign the IREC agreement.
  - e. Reappoint Calvin Benjamin as the Fire Warden. Motion passed to reappoint Calvin Benjamin as the Town Fire Warden.
  - f. Large tree at roadside on the church property across from Barrett Hall needs to be removed due to substantial dead branches within striking distance of the road. John Freitag stated that the church will arrange to have the tree removed.
  - g. Signed the Letter of Intent to Participate in the SFY23 Municipal Roads Grant-In-Aid Program to participate in the up-coming grant application process.
  - h. Regular Selectboard meetings in June will be held on June 8 and 29.

Motion passed to adjourn at 8:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan  
Recording Clerk