

Strafford Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, August 24, 2022, 6:00 pm at Town Office

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

Other participating: Lisa Bragg, PD Hardy, John Echeverria, Robert Huot, Curt Albee. Zoom: Greg Colling, John Freitag, Tom Bachman, Stephen Dycus, Cynthia Odell, Trey Piepmeier, Rocky Fuller, Robert McAllister, Gretchen Graner

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns. John Echeverria noted that he sent a letter at noon regarding proposed way forward for Bridge 30, which missed the deadline for addition to the agenda. Chair suggested that SB members would review the letter, and could send questions. Chair asked that PD Hardy and Jeff Solsaa review the materials.

Robert Huot requested clarification about the strip of land noted in 8/10/22 minutes, which Mike Hebb requested to purchase. Mr. Huot asked if he could also bid on the parcel. Chair clarified that should the Town sell any property, all residents would have an equal chance to purchase it.

2. Highway

- a. Roads and equipment. PD Hardy reported the roads are in good shape, though very dry which is creating dust problems. Has received a request to grade Whitcomb Hill Road but does not plan to grade it until the culverts left behind have been removed. David Paganelli reported that Calvin Benjamin intends to crush the culverts and use them as backfill. PD clarified that crushing them would not be acceptable; backfill for the road should be done using the same materials used by the Highway Department. Trees and brush on Lloyd property are growing into the roadway and blocking the sight of drivers coming down from Turnpike and Mine Roads. PD was advised to contact the Lloyds about cutting back the brush. On Redden Road, at Tim Denny's house, the culvert is full, which could cause a washout on the road. PD will talk to Tim and intends to take a backhoe up to clear it out. Discussions with Chris Bump advised that to make Bridge 30 safe through the winter, we will need 11 jersey barriers, which will cost \$660/month and incur a delivery fee. It will be necessary to hire an excavator to place them and there will be a signage expense. The excess weight to of the barriers may be a problem. On Sept 6 painting of Tyson Bridge will start, and the road will be closed. The contractor will provide signage for road closure.
- b. Bid question Justin Morrill Bridge #23. Jeff Solsaa spoke with Mary Ellen Hayward Parkman from Northwoods to clarify how the bid process was conducted, and our continued openness to working with Northwoods in the future.

3. Approve the minutes of the 8/10/22 regular meeting. Motion passed to approve the minutes with the modifications: included under Item 2: "David addressed her concerns." And

removed from Item 9. “SB agreed that all four will follow the same publicly transparent process.” Motion passed unanimously.

4. Town Office Building discussion, Feasibility Study, Tom Bachman, Architect. Mr. Bachman explained that he worked on previous plans for the Town Office, and he is familiar with the building. Prepared 6 different approaches in 2019, including the selected option (renovation and small addition), estimated at \$402,000 at that time. That estimate is now no longer valid due to cost increases and scarcity of materials, and he estimates that that plan would cost at least 50% more. The current proposal is to provide a feasibility study and cost estimate for 2 options: 1) renovation with small addition, and 2) expansion of the building if additional land could be acquired. The report would be ready by March 2023, in time for Town meeting vote, if the Selectboard can approve the proposal by mid-September. Curt Albee suggested that the process build on the work that was done previously. Discussion re: how best to proceed, options for use of the upstairs space, ways to expand current the footprint, historic preservation considerations. Chair requested that Mr. Bachman review the 2021 report of the Town Office Planning Committee to better understand the space requirements for the Town Office, including a desperate need for storage, increased vault size, a preference for the Town Clerk to be on the first floor, more work stations, and a better meeting space. Water supply and septic system are shared with neighboring property, which also needs to be considered. Jeff Solsaa noted that since the 2019 engineering assessment, a great deal of moisture has been flowing under the building and that a new foundation is likely to be required, including elevating the building to avoid flooding. Bachman suggested that a historic preservation consultant would be required if federal preservation funds were pursued. Bachman suggested a committee of decision-makers to prepare what is presented to the Town. David Paganelli made a motion to have Mr. Bachman proceed as proposed. Chair seconded. Discussion re: why two options are needed when Option 1 does not address the need for the necessary additional workspace and as a result is not a viable option, and whether a feasibility study is necessary. David adjusted the motion: To ask Tom Bachman to provide a proposal for Option 2 only and provide a revised price for the proposed work. Brian seconded. Toni-aye; Brian--aye, Dave--yes, Mary--aye, Jeff--aye. David Paganelli will contact Tom Bachman. Committee members were not finalized, noting the need to include broader representation.
5. Budget to Actual 2022. Chair provided a summary of current budget status, including the unanticipated Highway expenditures resulting from mud season road damage, increased contractor costs, higher gas and oil costs, as well as savings from retreatment, labor, paving and equipment rental. Current projected budget overrun is \$271,819: ARPA funds of app. \$319,000 will be used to cover the overrun.
6. Consider IDEAL Vermont. “IDEAL” stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, and Leadership, a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible actions. Strafford has been identified for this opportunity because it has demonstrated a willingness to confront and overcome inequity, including racial/ethnic inequity, through actions such as the adoption of the Declaration of Inclusion. Motion passed unanimously to join the initiative and look for a

member of the community to represent us. Mary will seek to identify community representatives for consideration.

7. Acknowledgement of Correspondence

- a. Xusana R. Davis, Esq., Executive Director Racial Equity, State of Vermont, RE: Consider IDEAL Vermont, respond to invite by 9/12/22 (see item 7)
- b. Requests to Selectboard to resume Zoom sent from; Kate Cassidy, Ken Bushnell, Lianne Thomashow, Sonya Schumacher, Mark Shaw, Craig Allen, Denny & May Emerson, Danette Harris, Gretchen Graner, Chip Hedler, Cindy Binzen, Pamela Robinson, Lisa Durstin, John Echeverria, Paul Perkins, Kelly Harman, Blake Spencer, Susan Tiholiz, Mike Landon, Judie Englander, John Echternach, Sandra Fling, Rebecca Siebel, Jaydl McCaffrey, Sarah Root and David Humphry
- c. Mary Ellen Hayward Parkman, PE, Project Manager, Northwoods Excavating, RE: Bridge 23 (see 2b agenda item)
- d. Strafford Conservation Commission, RE: Honoring Barb and Wally Smith

8. Liaison Updates

- a. Renaming Pocket Park. Motion passed unanimously to change the name the Pocket Park to honor Barb and Wally Smith and to allow the Conservation and Rec Committees decide upon the new name.
 - b. Flooding and River Blockage from trees blown down in the river. David Paganelli spoke with Micki and James Erbaugh; Mary spoke with Eric Donaldson, who is working with the Pocket Park to address the issue and is willing to advise on options for dealing with the problem.
 - c. A skateboard park has been established at a temporary site at the Park and Ride. The structures will need to be removed before winter, as intended by the Rec Board.
 - d. Chair reported on discussions with Geoff Martin, who is available to work with Selectboard on a work scope and cost estimates for Town Garage energy reduction plans before the budget process begins, and to work with Tom Bachman to discuss the energy aspects of the Town Office renovation. Geoff has started work on the capital budget and will send to the SB for review.
 - e. Chair updated review of information on the Huot property. Additional information from Mr. Huot has not been received. Chair will send a letter noting that in the absence of additional information, parking and housing birds on the Town's property is not authorized.
9. Other. David Paganelli recused himself from all future discussions of the process and sale of the Town properties.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Recording Clerk