

## **Strafford Selectboard Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 6:00 pm  
Strafford Town Office

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

Other participating: Lisa Bragg, John Freitag, Greg Colling, John Echeverria, Susan Cloke

Meeting called to order to 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns. None.
2. Highway.
  - a. Staffing. No update.
  - b. Equipment. No significant updates.
  - c. Roads. PD met with Blue Mountain to request a preliminary estimate for ditching on Robinson Road. Jeff discussed with Asa Manning his plans for future years, who anticipates hauling sap for 5 years. Discussion re anticipated damage to the road during mud season, and limited options for managing the potential damage, possibility of closing the road, and other options for planning and restricting access during mud season. Chair proposed that research be conducted with the State to determine how best to manage the situation. Blue Mountain should be starting work on Miller Pond and Old City Fall Roads. ECFiber has been notified. Road Crew cannot remove it due to proximity to ECFiber's lines. Chair will follow up with ECFiber to emphasize the importance of prompt removal of the tree.
  - d. Open bids for 2023 Ten Wheeler. Deadline for bids has been extended till October. Agenda item tabled till October.
  - e. Open bids for Justin Morrill Bridge #23. Two bids received: Cold River Bridges LLC: \$678,756; Daniel's Construction: \$540,000. Town has received a \$200,000 grant and has budgeted app. \$80,000 in 2022 for the bridge. The cost for this bridge will be included in the 2023 annual budget. Jeff noted that a possible alternative may be an aluminum bridge, however it is not clear that it would be cheaper. The previous tender specified concrete, so an aluminum structure could not be considered. Discussion re what to do about the high cost of bridges (bid estimates have increased by over 100% in since 2020). Board will revisit at the next meeting, after Road Crew and liaison review the bids to determine why costs have risen.
  - f. Identify work the selectboard liaison will be responsible for. Jeff and Mary will work to articulate the responsibilities of Selectboard Liaison to support the Road Foreman and Crew.
  - g. Odell Road is shown as a throughway to Ames Road on Google Maps and is being attempted as a route by delivery trucks who then must back down Odell Road. Residents have requested that a "No Through Road" marker be placed at the intersection with Brook Road. Town Clerk determined that in 1973 Odell Rd. was recorded as "formerly untraveled, currently Class 4", but other documents indicate that it was thrown up in 1966. Motion passed to post a no through road sign at the bottom of Odell Road. Town Clerk will notify State of the status of the road. Lisa noted that Andrus Road will require similar clarification for the road register.

3. Approve the minutes of the 6/29/22 Regular meeting. Motion passed to approve the June 29 minutes with the following modifications: Tyson Bridge bid is due July 27<sup>th</sup> and the truck RFP deadline is extended to October 2022. Brian abstained due to absence.
4. Review “Bridge 30 Neighbors” group’s plans. Greg Colling presented 3 options recommended by the Bridge 30 Neighbors group. Cost of the options is not available. Discussion about the various options and costs. Board’s priority is to make the bridge safe for the winter. Jeff will contact Hook to see if the rail construction can be done this year and will seek to get estimates for option 3 from two contractors.
5. O’Neil Property sale proposals from 2 realtors. Two proposals were received; both offer to handle to sale for an 8% fee. One provided a thorough analysis and proposed a sales price of \$80,000. Lisa clarified the options for selling the parcel as governed by 24 VSA Section 1061: (1) Notice and publication provided at least 30 days prior to conveyance, 5% of legal voters may sign petition to object, and vote would be held at special or annual meeting; (2) put a vote directly to voters at duly warned special or annual meeting; and (3) convey the property by its own action if specific criteria are met. The Selectboard decided to move forward with the first option. Motion passed to comply with 24 VSA section 1061 and notify the public of the Selectboard’s intent to sell the O’Neil parcel and the Miller Pond parcel. Notice and publication will be posted according to regulations at 3 public places and in a newspaper of general circulation. Abutters to the parcels will be notified. Lisa will contact Diebold and inform them of our intent to sell the property.
6. Town Office updates. Chair spoke with Fiona Tilles regarding a proposed feasibility study and timeline. Ms. Tilles has declined to participate in the proposed process. David Paganelli reported discussions with Susan Cloke about possible lot line adjustment, and she continues to be willing to consider the option once plans are fully developed. Tom Otterman is available to conduct a survey of the parcel. Lisa will circulate the estimate when received. David will contact Curt Albee and Rocky Fuller to update them on the situation and contact an architect for an estimate of the cost of a feasibility study.
7. 2022 Strafford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. Team has been identified, including Brian Johnson (Zoning and Selectboard), Beth Preston (Fast Squad), Shawn Harlow (Fire Department), Jason Schumacher (EMD), Planning Commission Member (TBD). Kyle Katz, TRORC, will lead the process and has sent out a meeting request to start the process, to be completed by November.
8. Acknowledgement of Correspondence:
  - a. Rocky Fuller, THAG Minutes for 6/23/22 meeting
  - b. Geoff Martin, June IREC report
  - c. Rett Emerson, RE: Zoom
  - d. Chloe Wexler, Analyst, Property Valuation and Review Div., VT Dept of Taxes, RE: FY23 Education Tax Rates, Hold Harmless and PILOT Estimated payments. 2022 tax rates for school are lower for the current tax year: Homestead tax rate: 1.5417; Non-homestead rate: 1.5373.
  - e. Ken and Karen Odell RE: Odell Road
  - f. Jackie Chase RE: tree on Kibling Hill Road

9. Liaison Updates.

- Lisa reported that she is waiting for the Listers to provide the final Grand List in order to set the 2022 tax rate. A special meeting will be required to finalize the rate, to be held on July 20 at 6:00 pm.
- Road Crew will be taking time off in the coming weeks. Selectboard will be informed of specific dates for each crew member.
- Tax collectors' deed for Stanley property has been filed as of July 11, and the Town now owns the Stanley property on Mine Road. Clean-up of the parcel will be required; Chair will contact John Schmeltzer to see if funds can be identified. BCA will need to abate the taxes and Listers will be able to set the taxable value.
- Jeff has contacted the attorney for the Benjamin junkyard and expects to hear back from him soon.
- VLTC has recommended that the claim by Susan Cloke for water in her basement be denied based on the information provided. Selectboard concurs with the recommendation given the information provided.

10. Other. David requested that members reconsider use of zoom. Discussion re: pros and cons of meeting in person, including increased access during winter and mud season, improved clarity and quality of communications in person, and the increased productivity resulting from physical presence at meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan  
Recording Clerk