

Strafford Selectboard Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 6:00 pm
Strafford Town Office

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

Other participating: Lisa Bragg, PD Hardy, John Freitag, Robert Keiss, Ed Eastman, Greg Colling, Susan Cloke, Tim Bergeron, Brett Tofel, Robert McAllister, Sarah Danly, Eric Lopez, Ann, Susan Cloke

Meeting called to order at 6:06 pm

1. Public Concerns. Bob Keiss has questions about the zoning regulations governing the O'Neil Lane property and noted that his deed allows right of way to Rte 132. Brett Tofel urged the Board to adopt the Vermont Declaration of Inclusivity (item 7).
2. Highway.
 - a. Staffing: open position, clarification of P.D.'s duties and hourly rate, Ryan's performance evaluation and hourly rate. No applications received for the open position. Board reviewed the job description of the Shop Foreman, including responsibilities. PD confirmed that he is OK with the job description. PD proposed a new hourly rate. Selectboard will consider and decide. Ryan's signed performance review has been received and filed. Motion passed to increase his hourly rate to \$21.00/hour effective the next pay date. Discussion re: collaboration and reciprocity between towns (especially Thetford and Sharon) to maximize efficiencies and share costs, especially trucking of materials. Increased cost of trucking is anticipated as diesel prices increase.
 - b. Grading of gravel roads progress. Most of the stone used during mud season has been covered with hard pack, but gravel supplies are now low. PD estimates need for an additional 2500 tons of hard pack. Motion passed to purchase 2500 tons of hard pack. PD reminded the board that we will need to build the gravel stockpile back for next year, estimated 3000 tons required for next year. Chair thanked PD for his great work and urged the crew to take some well-earned vacation time.
 - c. Blaktop Rte. 132 paving update. Jeff reported that Blaktop has not yet found time to meet due to being short-staffed and over-booked.
 - d. Review Tyson Bridge and Justin Morrill Highway Bridge #23 bids, timeline, etc. Tyson bridge painting job has not gone out to bid yet. Lisa is working on revisions to the RFP and will finalize with Jeff before sending it out. Bridge 23: Jeff held a mandatory pre-bid meeting today with Coldriver Bridges and Daniels. Bid submissions are due July 13.
 - e. Open mowing bids. Thorp Diversified submitted bid for \$17,000 for May 1-Nov 1; 26 weeks and spring cleanup. Dave Paganelli will seek further clarification.
 - f. Road Crew noted that people pulling weeds roadside on gravel roads is creating an issue for road grading, and potentially a safety issue for motorcycles. Residents are requested to bag the plant waste instead of leaving them in the road, so they don't get pulled into the road during grading.
3. Approve the minutes of the 5/18/22 Special and 5/25/22 Regular meetings. Motion passed to approve the minutes of the 5/18/22 Special Meeting, with edits to the addresses for Kate Garrison, changed to 49 Mine Road, and Jen Pratt, changed to 45 Mine Road. Motion passed to approve the 5/25/22 regular meeting minutes.

4. Ed Eastman, Strafford Constable. Ed reported that sick raccoons are a problem (distemper) and urges those who see one to try to stay with it until he can arrive and take care of it. Black bear sightings have been made all over town. Ed noted that he cannot kill a bear, so residents are advised to call State police or the Game Warden. Ed reported that in general law enforcement issues are fewer due to State police engagement, but Ed uses his training to resolve local issues if possible before contacting Orange County Sheriff whenever possible. Ed requested an additional animal snare to replace a damaged one that is currently in use. Ed is currently taking care of Old City Falls and responds to suspicious vehicles and some domestic issues but does not get involved if there are guns involved. Due to physical limitations, Ed cannot manage the parking issues for July 4 or for the Morrill Homestead in coming weeks, but they will be managed by the Fire Dept and the Morrill Homestead. Chair thanked Ed for his report on activities and his service to the town.
5. Sarah Danly, 4-Town Coalition Update for Meaghan Ashbury. Sarah, Chair of 4-Town coalition chair, presented update on White River Valley Consortium Working Communities Challenge Project, focused on increasing housing for entry-level workforce and beginning entrepreneurs. Invited board member to attend a workshop on June 30th in Bethel; Greg Colling recommended that a member of the Planning Commission attend.
6. Bridge 30. Greg Colling presented information on Bridge 30, on Brook Road. Chair noted that we have not heard back regarding the grant application and requested that the group provide cost information on other options. Liaison clarified that before winter the road needs to be plowable. Greg reported that the group is investigating funding sources. Discussion re existing bids submitted, deadlines for project work, status of discussions among the bridge 30 group. Selectboard requested that the group will attend June 29 Selectboard meeting with their plans and submit design ideas by the July 13 selectboard meeting.
7. Vermont's Declaration of Inclusion, Town of Strafford's support. Eric Lopez presented a summary of the Vermont's Declaration of Inclusion and requested that the Selectboard adopt it. Eric noted that the Town of Strafford adopted an ethics standard in November 2020, which was among the first of its kind in Vermont and is consistent with the State Declaration. Motion passed for the Selectboard to adopt the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion. Vermont Declaration of Inclusion was signed by all Selectboard members.
8. Town Office any updates? Kerry Bushway has provided confirmation that Morgan Smith's parcel is 1.01 acres of land. Lisa confirmed that Town Office does have flood insurance, and reported that Tom Otterman has advised that land lower than 918 feet is in the flood zone, and that the pasture behind the Town Office building is therefore likely in the flood zone. Building the land up would require approval from FEMA. Lisa will check on whether the Town Office has adequate insurance coverage given that it is in the flood zone.
9. Acknowledgement of Correspondence.
 - a. Eric Lopez, RE: Declaration of Inclusion
 - b. Rocky Fuller, RE: Town House Advisory Group Minutes 5/26/22
 - c. Meghan Asbury, 4-Town Coalition Coordinator, RE: 4-Town Coalition Updates through May 2022

- d. John Hawkins, RE: Selectboard and Trustees of Public Funds. Discussion re use of the Carrie Sanborn Fund, and increasing community access to the existing funds, adding information to the Town website, discussion with committee.
- e. Geoff Martin, Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator, May IREC Report

10. Liaison Updates.

- Brian continues to work on parking issues on Stanley property.
- A truck is parked in the Park and Ride. Brian will try to contact the owner to have it moved.
- Fences at Benjamin and Clark properties are supposed to be in place by June 2022.
- Lisa reported that 5 dog owners have not licensed their dogs (8 dogs total), including several dogs with expired rabies vaccines, and will be charged late fees. All owners have received multiple notices since January 2022, and phone calls to remind them of the April deadline. Selectboard members will follow up with owners.

11. Discussion re: how to proceed with salary scale for Town staff, Highway department requirements, allocation of responsibilities. Increased complexity of administrative tasks and resulting increased demands on staff. Additional calculations will be required to better understand the budget implications.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Reporting Clerk