

Selectboard Meeting September 11, 2019

Board members present: Brian Johnson, Kate Siepmann, Toni Pippy, Pat Kelly, Lauri Berkenkamp

Others present:

Lisa Bragg, Town Clerk; Jon MacKinnon, Road Foreman; Ham Bone; Gus Speth; Cameron Speth; Susan Hodges; Bob Wilson; Jennifer Brown for *The Herald of Randolph*; Gil Robertson; Barbara Smith; Nick Clark; Doc Bagley; David Lutz

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Citizen Concerns

Bob Wilson asked how long the mine project would continue—the project will last throughout the year, although it's mostly mop up.

2. Town Highways and Equipment Update

Highway Department Projects update

Jon said they are on the last FEMA cleanup project—Route 132 is finished, Kibling Hill is underway. The new truck is in.

RE: Pennock Road. Jon said the ditches are the state standards and the road is actually wider than it was before the repairs.

RE: Carpenter Hill Road sign. Jon will investigate a new sign that is more reflective and could be closer to Carpenter Hill Road.

RE: Sign on 132 over the guard rail. Jon will take care of it.

Kate asked Jon about town border signs for every main road. These signs are about \$120 per sign. Jon will put one up on Old City at the Vershire line and will check on Miller Pond and the Ayers Road to see if they are still there. Bob Wilson said there is one missing on Jordan Road. Jon will investigate.

Bob Wilson said that the 132 and Tyson Road intersection is dangerous and asked if there could be a "Caution" sign. Jon said he'll check the road to see if there are good solutions.

Toni has estimates for paving. Our budget has \$253,000. We are going to receive \$168,000 from the paving grant for Route 132. There are four other projects: Downer Forest Road (\$12,000 estimate); trench around Common and the stretch down to Stone Soup (\$8,200); section of the triangle by the Town Office (\$14,000). There is also an estimate for \$1,000 to pave the small section in front of the Hug property. Toni estimates that we have enough to do all of these and stay within the budgeted amount.

3. Correspondence

Draft of Climate Strike letter:

Bob and Carol Wilson re: Ash tree inventory: Wilsons counted all of the ash trees along the public roads and which ones are likely to be the town's responsibility. There is an estimate 1275 ash trees

that the town will be responsible for removing along roadsides. This list is available at the town clerk's office.

4. Approve minutes of August 28 regular meeting

Board moved, seconded, and approved minutes of August 28.

5. Town House update

Rocky reported the minutes of the August 29 Town House Advisory Group. Town House Advisory Group minutes are available on the town website.

6. Information Nick Clark's Regional Energy Coordinator

Nick Clark came back before the board. He spoke to 7 towns; all have expressed interest. The cost for the coordinator to Strafford would be approximately \$7,000. This isn't a commitment to fund; rather, he is asking to put it before the town at Town Meeting and then they'll move forward. His proposal is for 3 years. Staffing and administration would be Two Rivers Ottaquechee Regional Commission. Pat asked if there was a substantial decrease in responsibilities and advantages because of the decrease in cost. Nick said there was no real decrease in responsibilities. Rather, they recalibrated their costs based on comparisons with other coordinator positions regionally. Nick is suggesting a resolution that the project only moves forward if all towns approve this budget costs. He said that VLCT has said it is fine to budget this position as a line item rather than an article, so he is preparing for the idea that all 7 towns will pass this. If this passes, the plan is to hire a coordinator by July 1.

Board moved that Strafford participate in a joint service contract with Two Rivers as outlined in the regional energy coordinator position and budget \$7,066, pending approval at Town Meeting. Board discussed that many other additional expenses are also being proposed, although Toni noted that the paving budget is a long-term project and the town office renovation expenses haven't been finalized or approved. Board agreed that this position is good policy for the town and the town would likely get the cost back. Board approved the motion.

7. Energy Committee update on Windows

Doc Bagley reported that they launched the Window Dressers program. Fifteen Strafford residents qualify for low-income heat assistance. The group is looking to make 100 windows. Committee is compiling a list of interested residents and have 8 volunteers to help measure and make windows. This is a pilot year for the program. The committee has over \$2,000 in donations toward off-setting the cost of windows for low-income residents. Doc Bagley, Kevin Grady, and David Lutz are coordinators.

8. Strafford and Climate Change

Group in town organizing to have Strafford participating on the Climate Strike on September 20. The group want to have signs and have people stand on Barrett Hall corner on the 20th. Group also wants to have a sing-in in the UU Church the next week with tables offering information about what people can do to act on climate change. Third thing is to present a resolution to the selectboard. It currently is in draft form. They would like to board to acknowledge that we have received the draft and encourage the group to proceed with adopting a declaration of climate emergency. Other towns in Vermont are pursuing this track in order to attract the attention of the state and federal government.

Board discussed the letter and suggested that the motion should be put before the town rather than decided by the selectboard. Toni recommended that the group put a petition for town residents to decide on the proposal and put it on the warning for Town Meeting. After much good discussion, the group will return to the selectboard with a revised proposed petition draft for the board to review.

9 Ash Tree Inventory

Please see above correspondence

10. Replacement for vacancy on the Planning Commission and Development Review Board

Alan Donohue would like to be on the Planning Commission and Sean Lewis would like to be on the DRB. Motion was made, seconded, and approved to appoint Alan Donohue to the Planning Commission and Sean Lewis to the Development Review Board.

11. Town Office Repairs—work on Q&A

Board compiled a list of questions regarding the project that were solicited from residents. Many of these will need to be answered by the architect, Town Office renovation committee, and others. Board members will contact appropriate people to answer them and have a goal to answer all questions before the next meeting.

12. Other

Board signed a letter of appreciation to Steve Campbell re: retiring from Development Review Board and Planning Commission.

Traffic study information on 132 is still in process.

Asset management of paved roads is ongoing.

Board created a badge for the Animal Control Officer.

9-1-1 address updating is in progress.

Unlicensed dog issue: this is ongoing. Ed Eastman will talk to the sheriff.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauri Berkenkamp
Recording Clerk