

Strafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 6:05 pm at Town Office

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

Other participants:

In person: Steve Marx, Bart Rutledge, Mike Scanlon

Via zoom: Lisa Bragg, John Freitag, Greg Colling, Curt Albee, Rocky Fuller

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns. Steve Marx requested that ARPA funds be used for a range of Town priorities, not just for highway department. Chair clarified that the Selectboard will undertake a process to allow community groups to request ARPA funds in the next year, once it is clear what remains after the budget is reconciled.
2. Highway.
 - a. Roads and equipment. Jeff Solsaa reported on behalf of the Road Foreman, who is currently on leave. Road crew is doing lots of grading and hauling of sand and gravel. Everything seems to be going well. A clogged drainage ditch on Brook Road was cleared. Saturated soil around the ditch is slowly draining and will take some time to clear.
 - b. Additional Radar Speed Limit signs. Efforts to secure speed warning signs are underway.
 - c. Brook Road Bridge, Bridge 30, Preparation for Winter. A grant was received for the bridge barriers, and they will be placed by SD Ireland. Some prep work will be required. Jeff will meet with Chris Bump to make sure we comply with VTrans guidance for how to place the barriers.
 - d. Vacant position. Applicant identified and interviewed by Jeff and Road Foreman. References are being checked.
 - e. Trees in the river follow-up. An estimate of \$2,500 was received to remove the trees in the river behind Bart Rutledge's house, which could cause flooding. Discussion re where to put the logs. Jeff will contact Earl Ransom about his interest in the wood. David Paganelli made a motion that the Town pay half the cost of tree removal from Bart's property up to \$1,250, including removal of the wood. Toni seconded. Discussion re: options for removing the smaller branches and leaving the main tree trunk. Motion passed. Mary, Toni, David and Jeff voted in favor. Brian voted against.
3. Approve the minutes of the 10/26/22 regular meeting. Motion unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the 10/26/22 regular meeting. Mary abstained due to absence from the meeting.
4. 2023 Budget Request letters, Employee Benefit Credit, and 2022 Budget. Chair requests Town Clerk to send out Budget Request letters. Chair reported that the health insurance plans that Town employees have chosen have increased in price for the coming year. Brian made a motion to increase the insurance benefit by 6%; Jeff seconded. Motion not passed. Chair made a motion to increase the insurance benefit by 4%; David seconded. Motion passed, with Toni, Mary, David, and Jeff voting in favor. Brian voted against. Chair provided additional information about 2022 end of year budget projections, including significantly higher gas and oil costs, increased gravel purchases and higher costs for Tyson bridge repair, mowing and other line-item adjustments and unplanned expenses. Current 2022 estimated expenses exceeding the approved budget is approximately \$193,000.
5. 11/1/22 to 10/31/23 Northeast Resource Recovery Association, Memorandum of Understanding. Michael Scanlon presented the proposed new MOU for recycling. The cost of

separate glass collection has doubled, and fuel surcharges have been added, resulting in significant cost increases for recycling this coming year. Mike estimates the cost of \$15,000-16,000 for recycling charges in 2022 and estimates that for 2023 we might need \$5,000 extra. Mike noted that this is the only option, and if we do not sign the MOU the recycling center will be closed. Discussion re: alternative recycling and garbage disposal options for residents. Toni made a motion to sign the MOU, Mary seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The Selectboard agrees to sign the MOU noting that we are being held over a barrel and that recycling is no longer profitable to the town.

6. Acknowledgement of Correspondence.

- a. Geoff Martin, IREC, October 2022 Progress Report
- b. Andy Behrens, RE: Reappointment to ECFiber board
- c. Peter G. Gregory, AICO, Executive Director, TRORC, RE: Geoff Martin IREC, resignation effective 12/2/2022
- d. Alan Beebe, Executive Director, Upper Valley Ambulance, RE: UVA 2023 per capita increase to \$51.00, resulting in a \$2,188 increase from last year.
- e. Michael Scanlon, Recycling Committee, RE: NRRA MOU 2023
- f. David Grant, RE: drainage ditch on Brook Road

7. Liaison Updates.

- Mary reported that VLCT has provided language for the warning for adoption of Australian Ballot for future Town Meetings.
- Chair reported a meeting with the Public Trustees re: the Carrie Sanborn Trust, which has approximately \$500,000 in funds that they would like to disburse. The Trustees for Public Funds provided possible options for how the funds could be used. CST committee may need to consider modifications to their disbursement process to accommodate these options. Mary agreed work with the CST.
- Steve Marx has provided guidance to residents for rat control, including a public notice on the listserv.
- Mary reported that the Planning Commission held a forum regarding the Town Plan which provided useful feedback, and the commission is planning to make modifications to finalize the Town Plan. Once finalized, the Plan will be presented to the SB and a public hearing will be held.

8. Other.

- Curt Albee presented an update on Town Office committee progress. Draft plans have been delivered to the Town Clerk but have not yet been reviewed by the Selectboard.
- Tom Otterman has not yet conducted the survey.
- The next Selectboard meeting will be November 30th.

Motion passed to go into Executive Session for recruitment of staff discussion at 7:50 pm. Exited Executive Session at 8:05 pm. No motions made.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Recording Clerk