

## Strafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 10, 2022, 6:00 pm at Town Office

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

Other participating: Lisa Bragg, John Freitag, Thomas Worth, Asa Manning, Art Hanchett, Beverly Bilsky, Robert Huot.

1. Public Access to SB meetings. Chair reviewed requirements for SB meetings, including hybrid meetings, as provided by VLTC. Chair clarified that VT Open Meeting Law only requires that the public can attend Selectboard meetings; the Selectboard is not required to provide remote/video access. VLTC has provided guidance for how to properly hold a hybrid meeting (both in person meeting attendance and video access), which has specific requirements for participants and members. Chair proposed a modification to David Paganelli's motion of July 27 which was tabled till all members of the Selectboard were present. Motion passed to reinstate the hybrid public meeting. Discussion re the additional burden on members trying to run the meeting while participating fully; Mary Linehan noted that as the only board member who has run a zoom meeting, it is not possible to take notes, run the meeting and participate fully as a board member. Possible options for how to run hybrid meetings may include recruiting volunteers, hiring someone to run the zoom meeting, and recognizing that if there is an equipment failure the zoom option may not be available.
2. Public Concerns. Jeff Solsaa reported that Liz Clarke called to report a tree that appears to be in Town right-of-way and may fall into the road. PD looked at it and does not know how to safely take it down. While it is not currently in the right-of-way, if it falls it will block the road.

Beverly Bilsky asked why another feasibility study is planned for the Town Office; whether the work to date by previous committees has been considered; the status of discussions with Morgan Smith and Susan Cloke regarding acquiring additional land have been undertaken, whether the State has been consulted regarding vault site and document storage regulations, how adequate space will be ensured and whether digitizing materials is authorized. She felt that these questions have not been answered and should be addressed before another study is planned. David Paganelli addressed her concerns.

3. Highway
  - a. Roads and equipment. Jeff Solsaa updated the board regarding recent tree damage, including 46 electrical line breaks. Grading, mowing and sand hauling have been taking place, radios were installed last week. The Sherriff dropped off his repeater at the Town Garage. Our repeater is currently with Joe Truss in Corinth and will be retrieved and installed as soon as possible. Winter tires, sand and gravel for next winter need to be purchased (cost estimated at \$40,000).
  - b. 7/28/22 Storm damage. The Town has incurred unanticipated expenses, including hiring a log truck to haul downed trees for 3 days at app. \$1,200/day. The backhoe was damaged and will needs repairs, and it tires need to be replaced.
  - c. Bid decision for Justin Morrill Bridge #23. Discussion re increased bid estimates, when the grant expires, how best to proceed. Motion passed to authorize Jeff to negotiate a price of \$494,375. or less from Daniels for repair of the Justin Morrill Bridge #23.

- d. Tyson Bridge negotiated price. Jeff was able to negotiate a lower price for the painting of the bridge.
  - e. Electric Install on Robinson Road. Asa Manning would like to place electrical supply under the road, requiring road closure to prepare 36" deep ditch for a conduit, and installment of an electrical box on the other side. Road closure is estimated to only a couple of hours, and effort will be made to divert traffic into the field if possible. Asa noted that underground installment was recommended by GMP engineer. Proposes to do the work in the next 2 weeks with a licensed contractor and will include appropriate signage and caution tape in accordance with GMP underground standards. Asa will give 24-48 hours warning to the Road Crew.
  - f. Painting of lines, crosswalk, and no parking lines on paved roads. Cross walks and stop line painting is planned for September. We have been taken off the skip list for painting the center line on Rte 132, which is implemented by the State; fog lines must be painted by a private contractor, and we have not yet identified a contractor.
  - g. A complaint was received from Whitcomb Hill resident about road work done by a homeowner's contractor. Jeff visited the site and found that a concrete culvert has been left behind that redirects water onto the road, potentially causing erosion of the road. Contractor will be requested to remove the culvert from the road.
  - h. Russell Stone has indicated interest in a part-time temporary employee supporting the highway department. Jeff will discuss with PD and Russell possible terms of employment and provide feedback to the Board.
  - i. Jeff met with Blue Mountain on Miller Pond Road re: ditching to ensure clear plan for the work to be undertaken. Blue Mountain informed Jeff that materials have gone up 15%, and the bid estimate for the planned work on both Miller Pond and Old City Falls Roads is likely to be \$3,000 over the accepted bids. Jeff will discuss with Blue Mountain to clarify amendments to the contracts.
4. Approve the minutes of the 7/27/22 regular meeting. Motion passed to approve the July 27 meeting minutes. Mary abstained due to absence from the meeting.
  5. Motion passed to sign the standard grant agreement with AOT for Best Management Practices in accordance with the Vt Dept of Environmental Conservation.
  6. Review of 2022 thus far. What we wanted to accomplish and what we have actually done. Tabled for future meeting.
  7. Approve Procedures and Rules for the use of the Strafford Town House. Motion passed to approve Procedures and Rules for the use of the Strafford Town House.
  8. Town Office Building update
    - a. Land Survey of town office. No information has been received yet.
    - b. Architect, Tom Bachman to attend 8/24/22 meeting. No information has been received yet, but a proposal has been requested prior to the meeting.
  9. Town Property process progress for sales of O'Neil parcel (Parcel ID:01.442 and the Miller Pond parcel (no assigned parcel ID). Vote to put proceeds in town office initiative reserve. Discussion re the additional information that will be required before any of the parcels can be sold (including deed research), the need to ensure that Selectboard members take the steps

required to avoid any conflict of interest, establishing a clear and transparent process to ensure that the Town is aware of the sales, and the need for review of the process by Paul Gilles. Art Hanchett suggested use of auction as a means of selling the parcels. Motion passed that the proceeds of these four properties will be placed in the Town Office fund.

10. Acknowledgement of Correspondence

- a. Asa Manning, RE: Electric Install on Robinson Road (discussion item 2e)
- b. Geoff Martin, IREC Coordinator, RE: July IREC Progress Report
- c. Geoff Martin, IREC Coordinator, RE: Town buildings/IREC priorities (8/24/22 Agenda item)
- d. Requests to Selectboard to resume Zoom were recently sent from; Carol Bushway, Ellen Langtree, Micki Colbeck, Catherine Lindsey, Lisa Carlson, Olivia and Trey Piepmeier, Steve Dycus, Peter & Sherry Duveneck, Anne Peyton, Susan Hodges, David Paganelli, Tim Bergeron and Susan Lee, Charles Sherman
- e. Carol Bushway, RE: Storm debris (discussion item 2b)
- f. Mike Hebb, RE: My Understanding of last night's decisions
- g. Mike Hebb, RE: Equipment Trespassing on Whitcomb Hill
- h. Stephen Willbanks and Stephanie Willbanks, RE: Stockmayer Parcel. (8/24/22 Agenda item)

11. Liaison Updates

Discussion re challenges of finding volunteers for the wide range of Town activities. Chair recommends finding opportunities to educate and attract new volunteers, especially new town residents.

12. Other

Mr Hout spoke to contest the right-of-way on Mine Road. Chair clarified that the Town has acquired the Stanley property. Mr Worth reported that he has tried to accommodate complaints about access to the driveway. Chair requested that official documentation of Hout's deed to the property and official documentation of the property lines be provided to determine land ownership of the area in dispute.

Jeff reported that Mike Hebb has inquired whether a strip of unowned land bordering his drive might be available for sale or acquisition.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan  
Recording Secretary