

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

August 23, 2023

Town Office, 227 Justin Morrill Hwy, Strafford, 05072

Selectboard participants- John Freitag, Brian Johnson, Jeff Solsaa, Hannah Levinger, David Paganelli

Other participants in person- Phoebe Mix, Ed Huang, Chrissy Coburn, Steven Marx, **Martha Walker**, Donald Graham, John Echeverria

Participants via Zoom- Peter Jeffries, Colin Butler, Bill Thompson, Thomas Bossert, Kyle Katz, Roderick Maclay

### 1. Meeting called to order 6:00 pm

Guidelines for Selectboard conduct read

### 2. Public Concerns- Hearing none, slight change to the agenda to bring item 13- 203 Miller Pond Update earlier.

Steven Marx updated the board on the health concerns for 203 Miller Pond Road. The property will be going up for tax sale on August 24th and Steven will decide what to do once that has been completed. There is \$600 in the Neighbors Helping Neighbors fund left over from when Steven helped get rid of the oil barrels at the same property. In the last six months, a significant amount of house trash has accumulated on the property after a guarantee that it would not happen. The trash has become a health hazard in the fact that it is attracting rats, and bears. Steven has already contacted the state health department. The Board appreciates Steven for all of the work he has done. The Board moves to let Steven use his best judgment for how to utilize the \$600 in the Neighbors Helping Neighbors fund.

### 3. Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings

July 19th - David moved to approve the minutes, Jeff, John, and David voted Aye

August 9th- Brian moved to amend the minutes for agenda item 13 to say "The Board discussed the possibility of the Historical Society adding a handicapped parking space in front of the Historical Society in South Strafford." All approved the amended minutes.

### 4. Highway Updates

Jeff updated the Board on the progress of the 132 road work. The Kibling Hill work went to bid and Blue Mountain Construction put in the lowest bid. Jeff explained how Pike can finish the shoulder work while the FEMA work on 132 comes to a close. He suggested that the Board hold a public meeting in the future regarding the infrastructure needs for the town.

Agenda items 5 and 6 were skipped in order to listen to Ed Huang's update from the Rec Board.

### 7. School/South Strafford Recreation Area

Ed Huang came and read a letter from the Rec Board explaining the need to clarify which entity will take care of each piece of the property, but without any legal easements. The Board agreed with the Rec Board's suggestion and appreciates all of the work that the Rec Board has done.

### 5. Use of Buildings by Political Parties

The Republican party would like to use the town garage for their caucus. John Freitag read a letter from Paul Perkins in support of the idea. Brian moved to approve the request by the Republican Party to use the town garage- unanimously approved.

#### 8. Unified By-Laws and Flood Hazard Ordinance

Donald Graham from the Planning Commission discussed the recommendation that the Flood Hazard Ordinance be updated. Kyle Katz, from TRORC, clarified the updates to the procedure and standards in the new ordinance.

The By-Laws and Flood Hazard Ordinance must be voted on by the town after they have been approved by the Selectboard. There must be 15 days for a hearing notice after the Board approves the By-Laws and an additional 30 days for a notice for voting. The Selectboard moved to have an additional meeting on September 6th to review the By-Laws and Flood Hazard Ordinance.

Hannah moved to have voting on the By-Laws and Flood Hazard Ordinance be by mail in ballot- Jeff seconded. Hannah, Jeff, and David voted Aye, John and Brain voted Nay. The vote on the By-Law and Flood Hazard Ordinance will be by mail in ballot in November. The Board appreciates all of the work that Kyle Katz and the Planning Commission have done.

#### 6. Sale of Town Property

The O'Neil road/132 property sale is set to go through soon.

#### 9. Unlicensed dogs

Courtney Hardy has updated that there are still 2 properties in town with unlicensed and/or unvaccinated dogs. Unvaccinated dogs pose a public health concern and Courtney Hardy has done everything within her power to mitigate any hardships for the dog owners to license and vaccinate their dogs.

John moved to follow Courtney Hardy's recommendation that the owners of unlicensed and/or unvaccinated dogs be announced publicly after sufficient attempts to contact them have been made. Brain seconded the motion and all members approved.

#### 10. Town Office Project

The Town Office Project will need an archeological study done before any other major moves can be started. John will bring an estimate for the cost of an archeological study to the next Selectboard meeting.

#### 11. Grant Updates

There is a Municipal Energy Assessment Grant for insulating the Town Garage. The RFP grants are focusing on equity by looking at BIPOC and women owned companies. Stephanie Slayton is waiting on the planning grants that will come out next month for another round of grant applications for the town office. The Board appreciates Stephanie Slayton's work on finding and applying for grants for the town.

#### 12. Bridge 30 Update

The Bridge 30 project did not receive the Northern Borders Grant. John Echeverria would like to look into other funding options before foreclosing on the trusses from the Bridge 30 project. The Board would like to see an estimate for bringing the bridge to AOT standards and will vote on next steps for Bridge 30 with that additional information on September 6. The Board would like to thank John Echeverria for his work on the Bridge 30 project.

#### 14. Policing

There has been an uptick in crime in Strafford- the attempted mugging at Coburn's, theft of catalytic converters, etc. Jeff is wondering what it would cost to increase police presence in the village. There is no money in the budget for an increase this year, but the Orange County Police Department is continuing their normal patrols and will be present at the Newton School for the first day.

15. Correspondence-

O'Dell class 4 road will be fixed only if the town gets additional funding from FEMA.

Scott Traudt wrote in regarding a CDL position for the town. Jeff acknowledged that he dropped the ball in responding to Scott and apologized for failing to follow up. Jeff will do his best to do better in the future.

16. Liaison Updates-

A minimum of 3 selectboard members need to be present at the signing of the loan on August 24th.

John, Jeff, and Brian volunteered to be present.

The conservation work is being done at Old City Falls.

Hannah moved to adjourn, Brian seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Levinger