

Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting
July 27, 2020 Remote-Only Meeting Via Zoom
Approved Minutes

Electronic Participants: Sasha Thayer (Select Board Chair), Tammy Farnham (Select Board Member), Jim Volz (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk & Treasurer), Mara Brooks (Community Member)

The Select Board Meeting was called to order at 7:02 on July 27th, 2020.

Approval of/changes to the Agenda

Agenda changes:

- Contract for Washington County Sheriff
- Stray Animal Shelter Agreement (Central Vermont Humane Society)
- Old Home Days cancellation

Announcements:

Sasha announced that the mask requirement begins in Vermont on August 1st. Masks must be worn in public when you cannot keep a 6ft distance (inside and outdoors), with various exceptions. Sasha recognized that Vermont has remained at 56 deaths for over a month!

Public Comment:

Mara inquired if the link is going to be put on the Plainfield website for previous meetings. Sasha added a line to the first paragraph with a link to videos of select board meetings, as well as at the bottom on the minutes page. This concern has been addressed and Kathy has made the changes on the website. Tammy noted that it's important to let Kathy know of any/all changes made to the website so that she's on the same page— she urged Sasha to notify Kathy in these instances as she is managing the site.

Treasurers Report:

Election Updates: Linda stated that 400 absentee ballots have been sent out, 109 voted ballots have been returned. A ballot tabulator will be used to process the ballots, this has been approved by the board of civil authority and secretary of state's office. Linda has a meeting on Friday with them to finalize the logistics and training.

Warrants:

Payroll July 21st

Accounts payable July 24th

Jim moved to approve the above warrants, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Minutes:

July 13th – Jim noted a correction needed to the Highway Equipment motion section with “unanimous approval by Jim and Sasha”, he stated it should be changed to Tammy and Sasha.
July 23rd - (Special SB Meeting)

Tammy moves to approve the above minutes, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Contract for Washington County Sheriff:

The contract is identical to the previous contract. Tammy explained that all the numbers aren't filled in as the roads are patrolled more heavily in the summer due to speeding on back roads. \$10,000 is the budget approved in previous years.

Jim moved to approve the contract with the sheriff limited to the amount in the budget, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Jim moved to designate Sasha as the person to sign the contract, all in favor. Sasha said that she will insert the budget amount, sign the contract, and hand it into Linda.

Stray Animal Holding:

The only change on the holding agreement is on page 1: one of the bullet points has been removed, last year there was a cap on stray animal holding fees at \$8,000, Linda was not aware of this change so she said that she would be happy to reach out and confirm and see if it could be added back. Last year \$376 was spent on pets going to the Central Vermont Humane Society, so it is unlikely that it would go over the cap. Linda agreed to reach out and this item will be re-addresses in the next select board meeting.

Town Hall Opera House:

Sasha got a call from Will Colgan relating to the Town Hall Opera House. Linda stated that she doesn't think that the use Town Hall Opera House as only 15 people can safely be in the building. Sasha stated that the Rec Field could be used in substitution, and Will was receptive to this possibility. Jim stated that individual proposals should be considered for usage as they come in. Tammy brought up that the contract proposed by Keith for the Town Opera House wanted \$3,000, signing a contract prior to understanding our usage does not make sense. Sasha requested to put this on our next meeting agenda. Sasha will reach out to Keith via email to request his attendance at the next Select Board meeting for further discussion.

Road Work:

There had been a request for the road to be more accessible to the town forest (Gonyeau Rd), the town commissioner stated that it would be very costly to improving the road.

Tom Manchini sent the select board an email and stated that previously someone had referred to a pull off just before the town forest as a parking area, however, Tom indicated that this pull off is on his land and is accessible for town use only (i.e.: the snowplow). Tom also mentioned that the town forest is accessible through Maxfield Rd (class 3 road). Jim expressed that the town forest is rarely used and does not seem to be a good use of money to repair the road right now. Sasha suggested that the select board express this to Sarah Albert, as the Maxfield Rd access is very readily available.

George Cushing noted that people have been traveling at a very high rate of speed coming down Barre Hill Rd and there was a vehicle that almost crashed into a house. Linda added that Lafayette Highway Specialties estimates it would be \$4,195 to install 160 linear ft of guardrail. The traffic control would be done by the highway department, Mike estimated installation would take 1 day. The budget is \$3,500, so the installation would be over budget, but the road crew feels it is needed.

Tammy moved to approve the purchase and installation of the guardrail coming down Barre Hill Rd and curving around, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Jim moved to authorize Linda to sign the proposal, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Catch Basin Repair:

There is a pipe that is broke, Mike is not comfortable with doing the repair as he does not want to disturb the water pipe.

Bids are the following:

GM Bolin -\$18,606 + \$2,500 (paving)

Daryl Matthews - \$5,690 → within next 2 weeks

Dubois \$5,610 → 2-4 weeks

There is nothing in the budget for this repair, it may need to come out of the highway reserve. Sasha stated that this needs to be done so we'll find the money in the budget somewhere. Mike requested for Greg from the Water & Waste Water Department to mark the waterlines.

Jim moved to approved Daryl Matthews proposal for the catch basin repair, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Pedestrian Bridge Project Update:

Tammy has met with Ross and Andrea. The proposal is to send back out for bids with a few changes. The bridge is costing \$150,000 for traffic control to keep the bridge open during construction, if they close the bridge for 14 days it will significantly lessen the amount spent on traffic control. Offering incentives to finish in less time (i.e.: 10 days instead of 14, \$1,000/day that the bridge is not closed for). The structural engineer can re-evaluate to see where corners can be cut. It would cost approximately \$4,000 to revise the documents for the bids. The bids are currently \$800,000 to \$900,000. Tammy indicated if we don't move forward we the pedestrian bridge we have 3 to 10 years before the federal government requests for \$100,000 back. Sasha stated that we would need to include Greg Light to establish how it would affect the fire department – Tammy indicated that we would need to hear from the community to establish whether it would be appropriate to close the bridge, as the Select Board should not be making that decision alone. A special meeting was proposed to discuss this in more depth. The anticipated bid will be \$700,000 if the bridge is closed for 2 weeks, which will cost the town an additional \$60,000 - \$70,000. Jim stated that we could get a loan for the town's portion of the pedestrian bridge project. It would be ideal to get the project back out to bid in the fall, after

engineering revisions. Tammy proposed to have a special meeting to discuss the pedestrian bridge; including the closure of the bridge for 2-weeks. Sasha proposed Tuesday August 4th at 7pm to meet regarding the pedestrian bridge project. Sasha said that she would develop some language to put out to the public to urge their participation. Tammy indicated that since this might be a “hot topic” with lots of participation, so it might make sense to have a meeting coordinator. Sasha stated that she would reach out, otherwise Jim offered to be the coordinator.

Rt. 2 Intersection Project:

Tammy has been working with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to gather material to present to the town to gain input from the community. A Powerpoint will be presented at the beginning of each meeting, then dialog for community members to ask questions and obtain responses. There are two intersection options which have been renamed to: major or minor. Claire (from Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission) offered to attend each meeting for additional support. A script will be utilized to maintain consistency across each meeting.

Follow-Up Dates & Events:

Rec Field – Monday August 24th @ 4pm – Sasha volunteered
Rec Field - Wednesday August 26th @ 6pm
Zoom - Saturday August 29th @ 9am
Zoom - Tuesday September 1st at 11am or 12pm (lunch meeting)
Zoom - Thursday September 3rd at 7pm

Display meeting times/dates on posters throughout the town, and include invitations within tax bills that will be mailed out at the beginning of August to encourage community participation and involvement at the meetings indicated above.

Rehearsal for SB members with Erin & Claire:

Thursday August 20th (in the morning – time TBD)

Tammy indicated that it might be helpful to have all three select board members in attendance for the first meeting to ensure a common understanding and consistency for each proceeding meeting.

Basketball Camp Update:

As long as the basketball camp obtained approval from the Rec Field commission and they are following current state guidelines and protocols they are able to continue to host basketball camps.

Old Home Days:

It does not seem feasible to host Old Home Days with the current state guidance. Keeping a 6-foot distance for all of the festivities is impractical. Sasha will notify the town publically that Old Home Days is cancelled for 2020.

Blocks at the Rec Field:

Sasha has not yet created a visual of what it would look like to paint the concrete blocks at the Rec Field various colors. More to come.

Town Constable:

Sasha has tried reaching out to Paula Emery to consider the role as Town Constable. The job position has been posted on Front Porch Forum & Facebook (Plainfield People); with an application deadline of August 11th (needs to be changed to August 10th). Jim advocated that it doesn't make sense to spend money on advertising unless we do not receive any applications.

Additional Town Roles Requiring Job Descriptions:

Road Commissioner, Animal Control Officer.

Meeting Adjournment – 8:55pm

Tammy moved to adjourn, with a unanimous approval of all Select Board members.

Agenda Items:

Friends of the Opera House Contract

Stray Animal Holding Contract

Pedestrian Bridge

Rt. 2 Intersection