

## Plainfield Select Board Meeting Minutes June 2, 2021, 7:00 PM

*NOTE: The Select Board Rules of Procedure are available at [https://www.plainfieldvt.us/uploads/8/1/0/6/81063668/2021-04-26\\_plainfield\\_selectboard\\_rules\\_of\\_procedure\\_adopted\\_2021-04-26.pdf](https://www.plainfieldvt.us/uploads/8/1/0/6/81063668/2021-04-26_plainfield_selectboard_rules_of_procedure_adopted_2021-04-26.pdf)*

### **Present**

Sasha Thayer – Select Board Member  
Tammy Farnham – Select Board Member  
Jim Volz – Select Board Chair  
Linda Wells – Town Clerk and Treasurer  
George Cushing  
Eric Blaisdell – Times Argus  
Karl Bissex  
Mary Trerice  
Keith Swann  
Melinda Vieux  
Rose Paul  
George Springston  
Ryan Christiansen  
Susan Grimaldi  
Chris Ditmeyer  
Jesse Clayton  
Greg Western  
Charlie Cogbill  
Paula Emery

Volz called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

- ♦ Approval of/changes to agenda
- ♦ Announcements
- ♦ Public Comment
- ♦ Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report (Linda Wells) Including:
  - Re-roofing Municipal Building Update
  - Board of Listers 2020 Errors and Omissions Report Approval
  - Approval of Warrants
  - Approval of Minutes: January 5, May 5, May 10 and May 19
  - Authorization – Road Foreman 10-hour, 4-day Summer Work Schedule
- ♦ Consideration of Changing Regular Select Board Meeting Night to Tuesdays
- ♦ Confirmation of/Approval of Old Home Days date of September 11
- ♦ Update on Old Firehouse, Including Potential Sale
- ♦ Financial Review
- ♦ Ongoing and Anticipated Obligations
- ♦ American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Town (\$120,000)
  - Possible Use of and Priorities for Funds
  - Process for Receiving and Requesting Funds
- ♦ Route 2 Intersection Update – Including Review of Agreement Between Town and State Funds
  - ♦ Friends of the Opera House Contract Proposal
  - ♦ Enforcing Zoning Violation Fines Related to DRB Decision
  - ♦ Follow-up on Trespass on Town Land Related to Private Generator - Greg Western of the Cross Vermont Trail
- ♦ Other Business

### **Approval of/changes to agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

## **Announcements**

- ◆ Census Bureau mailing of National Health Interview Survey. Thayer encouraged people to open it.
- ◆ Thayer has more copies of the “Please Drive Slowly” sign. Call her to get one: 454-1131.
- ◆ Construction of the pedestrian bridge will begin on July 1.

## **Public Comment**

George Cushing remarked that the pedestrian bridge project could impede movement of emergency vehicles and school buses. Farnham noted that she went to the state and worked with the project engineer to make sure that the scope of work includes emergency vehicles and school buses passing over one lane bridge.

## **Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report (Linda Wells) including:**

### **Re-roofing Municipal Building Update**

Work on the roof should begin within the next few weeks. Linda hasn't received the contract for the smaller roofs yet but will remind contractor. **SB will need to see and approve contract – which will be at the June 22 meeting or at the special meeting on Tuesday, June 8.**

### **Board of Listers 2020 Errors and Omissions Report Approval**

Regarding previous discussion of the Board of Listers 2020 Error and Omissions Report, Linda noted that the Vermont Tax Department tracks and records changes. There too many for the town to track. Linda requests that the SB approve. **Farnham moved to approve. Approved unanimously.**

### **Approval of Warrants**

Accounts Payable: May 24 and May 26; Payroll for May 28. **Thayer moved to approve. Approved unanimously.**

### **Approval of Minutes, Including January 5, May 5, May 10 and May 19**

**Thayer moved to approve all. Approved unanimously.**

### **Authorization for Road Foreman to have 10-hour 4-day Work Schedule in Summer**

Linda reported that Mike Nolan, the Road Foreman, has some hesitation about approving the request to shift to four, ten-hour days because of the occasional need for 5 day week. There is a need for flexibility.

Discussion about whether to authorize Nolan to make the decision or to involve the SB in a meeting of the road crew.

**Thayer moved to authorize the Road Foreman to determine whether to allow a 10 hour, 4 day week in the summer on a weekly basis, when appropriate. Volz and Thayer approve, Farnham approves with request for meeting with employees.**

Volz noted that town employees can bring complaints to the SB if they have problems.

Discussion about need for regular reporting from Road Foreman. **SB decided to request to have him report out at the second meeting of each month.**

### **Access Permit and Weight Permit**

Access: H. Osgood on Bean Road, OK'd by Mike Nolan on May 21

Weight Permit: Champlain Construction Company

**Farnham moved to approve both permits. Approved unanimously.**

### **Consideration of changing regular Select Board meeting night to Tuesdays**

**Thayer moved to move SB meetings to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Approved unanimously.**

### **Confirmation/Approval of Old Home Days Date of September 11**

Thayer has been talking with Greg Light about Old Home Days resuming this year and date. Joe Perrault would like to do the street dance. September 11 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of September.

**Thayer moved to confirm approval for September 11, 2021. Approved unanimously.**

### **Update on Old Firehouse – Potential Sale**

Volz reported his finding that thirty day notice and physical posting in a local newspaper of record required for sale of town property. The same statute allows for leasing property. Thayer and Ryan Christiansen drafted a Request for Proposals (RFP). SB members expressed concerned about the time frame. Susan Grimaldi withdrew her offer to purchase it. Volz recommends going forward with the advertising as proposed, including a lease option.

**Volz proposed authorizing Thayer to send out the RFP with deadline of June 14 and project completion target date of October 1, 2021.** Thayer will send it to the SB members and if they approve she'll send it; if they have corrections they'll have a special meeting. **Approved unanimously.**

### **Financial Review – Ongoing and Anticipated Obligations**

Linda referred to Thayer's report, which was discussed at the May 19 SB meeting. Wells expressed concern about incurring debt. At this time there are two major projects (Route 2 intersection and Main Street pedestrian walkway) underway and one in the proposal stage (replacement of Brook Road bridge).

Farnham said that we are financially committed to pedestrian bridge and Route 2 intersection but that the Brook Road bridge has not been committed to.

Wells clarified that all financing over \$250,000 for the water and sewer lines in the Route 2 intersection requires an Australian ballot vote.

Farnham suggested that the town prepare for the Route 2 intersection expense by putting it into the budget and also noted that the SB held community meetings and a survey to assess and discuss the Route 2 intersection and the SB decided to endorse the project.

George Cushing stated that he thinks there should be a vote and requested that the town consider repair instead of replacement of Brook Road bridge.

George Springsten reminded the SB of the studies that were done of the Great Brook, which determined that the bridges in the village are far too small for larger volumes of water flow during major storms or floods.

This item is on the agenda for the next Select Board meeting, June 15.

### **American Rescue Plan Act funds to Town (\$120,000)**

Jesse Cooper sent a letter to the SB and discussion will be **tabled until the next meeting (June 15)**. Discussion will include: possible use of/priorities for funds and process for receiving/requesting funds.

### **Route 2 Intersection Update Including Review of Agreement Between Town and State**

Farnham reported that the town can negotiate with the state on the agreement, but once we sign it we will have to return funds if we do not go forward with the project. The state is supposed to get us more concrete numbers but haven't done so yet. There is no new information to share about this project. She expressed concerned that night work might increase the cost, explaining that the town may want night work as an option but we don't want to spend extra money on it.

Thayer raised several issues with the agreement:  
who is responsible for sidewalk replacement  
responsibility for street lights and traffic signals

the actual start date of the project  
water and sewer cost over-runs

**Farnham said that she will discuss these matters with Erin of VTRANS and said that she will invite Erin to attend a SB meeting soon.**

This item, the pedestrian bridge and the Great Brook bridge projects will be on future SB agendas.

#### **Friends of the Opera House Contract Proposal**

Keith Swann of the Friends of the Opera House requested that a member of the SB join a sub committee to work on the contract for use and management of the building. Farnham countered that she would like the whole SB to be involved in that discussion. **Farnham moved to begin the June 15 meeting one hour early (6:00PM) as a special meeting to discuss this proposal. Unanimously approved. Keith Swann will email the proposals to the SB.**

#### **Enforcing Zoning Violation Fines Related to DRB Decision**

Neighbors Chris Ditmeyer and Ryan Christiansen came to the meeting to request an update on the process and progress on this situation. They would like SB to communicate with a lawyer and also to communicate to M.S., the landowner, about the actual amount she owes on fines.

There was a review of actions taken to date and discussion about equal enforcement.

Christiansen reminded the SB that the town has already invested funds to clean the property up and prevent pollution of the adjacent stream, but that M.S. purchased the property and has connected an RV to a septic system. He stressed that the entire neighborhood has had this meeting several times and the question still hasn't been answered. His expectation was that the SB would report out on how they will enforce zoning rules at this meeting. He demanded action on this matter.

Thayer noted that the town could put a lien against the property to pay for the fines. Recommends that we go to an attorney promptly.

George Cushing spoke to the previous effort to clean up that property. Agrees with neighbors that the SB needs to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

Ditmeyer requested speed in this because of the illegal septic hook up, which is upstream from other houses and close to the brook. She also noted that there are chickens on the property but no one is living there.

**Volz said that he will contact Town Health Officer; requests an email from Ditmeyer detailing the issues to pass on to Health Officer and Zoning Administrator.**

#### **Followup re Trespass on Town Land Related to Private Generator with Greg Western of the Cross Vermont Trail**

Greg Western: The timeline: happened 2 years ago. Fall of '17, fall of '18 generator was moved but odds and ends are still within the easement area. Summarized a letter from Cross Vermont Trail to town and landowner. Wants letter recorded in the town's land records, the letter was reviewed by their attorney. Delay was due to the pandemic, the letter has not been sent.

There was discussion of the terms of the letter.

**Volz moved to accept the letter. Approved unanimously.**

The letter has to be signed. **Thayer moved that Volz be authorized to sign the letter.**

**Greg Western will coordinate the signatures and delivery with Volz. Attorney will file in the the land records. Approved unanimously.**

**Other business**

George Cushing requested an ordinance to keep landowners from leaving trash out on the property. The yard of a trailer on Brook Road is full of trash. Health Officer hasn't found a violation. The current occupant is a tenant.

Emery noted that the materials are a danger because of flooding risk and recommended contacting Will Colgan and Ned Swanberg of ANR due to new fluvial hazard zoning along the Great Brook.

**Thayer will contact Will and someone from ANR – and look up the other ordinance.** Maybe Grace Vinson has suggestions.

**Thayer moved to adjourn at 9:14 PM. The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 PM.**

**Agenda for Upcoming Meetings:**

**Recommendation for Special Select Board Meeting re “re-opening” and SB meeting arrangements when in-person meetings are possible, including hybrid meetings**

***Agenda items for June 15, 2021 Select Board Meeting***

Further discussion re items of focus for coming year

Appointments

Brook Road Bridge Replacement Project

Review of timeline provided by Alice Merrill

Financial implications of going forward and how to meet them

Review of ongoing and anticipated multi-year financial obligations inc. project not yet started

Implications of not going forward

- Discussion re whether there should be Town approval of the project

- Approval of minutes inc. June 2

***Agenda items for July 13, 2021 Select Board Meeting***

- Update on Pedestrian Bridge construction

- Continuity of Operations Planning, Grace Vinson, CV Regional Planning Commission

Respectfully submitted by Paula Emery