

Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting
July 20, 2021
Minutes-Approved

Present:

Jim Volz, Select Board Chair
Tammy Farnham, Select Board
Sasha Thayer, Select Board
Greg Light, Fire Department Chief
Mike Nolan, Road Foreman
Christine Ditmeyer
Ryan Christiansen
Melinda Vieux
Kathy Fancher
Rose Paul
George Springston
Sarah Albert
Alice Merrill
Keith Swann, Friends of the Town Hall Opera House
Betsy Zeigler
Paula Emery, Select Board Administrator
Adam Hochschild
Judy Cyprian
Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus)

Agenda:

Approval of/changes to agenda
Announcements
Public Comment
Report from Road Foreman Mike Nolan
Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report concerns (Linda Wells will not be present) including: Re-roofing municipal building update

- ♦ Approval of porch roofing (contract for main roof already approved) \$9,917
- ♦ Approval of contract for main roof and porch roofing with addenda
- ♦ Approval of warrants for Accounts Payable for 7/7/21 & 7/9/21 and Payroll for 7/9/21 & 7/16/21
- ♦ Approval of minutes inc. January 5, July 6 PM

Dog poop bins at Mill Street Park and Recreation Field & community assistance with dog poop bins

- ♦ Planning for reopening buildings/meeting arrangements for boards, ctees & commissions
TH/OH
Municipal building
Town garage and water/wastewater buildings

American Rescue Plan Act/Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery update & authorizations - Sasha
- review of anticipated amount of funds coming to Plainfield: \$132,116 (half 2021 and half 2022)
- review of restrictions on use of funds and time frame for using funds

- response to Cutler Memorial Library request for ARPA funds
- setting meeting time to hear from community members, organizations, town departments re best use of funds

Brook Road Bridge Replacement Project - setting time for further consideration of the project w/ community input

Pedestrian Bridge update including construction traffic control plan

Route 2 Intersection - special meeting on July 27 including review of agreement between Town and State

Old Fire House - set meeting time and date for review with Jay Southgate and meeting re how to proceed, including possible sale.

Bean Road Update

Conservation Commission request for approval of Bellavance Landscaping to mow town forest trails

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

Approval of – Changes to Agenda

Volz moved that the Conservation Commission item be moved to the end of the agenda and that the request for a catering permit be added to the agenda.

Announcements

Thayer announced two upcoming special meetings of the Select Board:

July 27, 6:00PM – Meet at Town Office to discuss and vote on contract with VTrans for the Route 2 – Main Street intersection remediation project

July 28, 5:30PM – Meet at the Old Fire House and then move to the Recreation Field for discussion. Town offices will be used for discussion in case of rain.

Public Comment (this item was taken up after the Road Foreman's Report – see below)

Report from Road Foreman Mike Nolan

Martin Meadow repaving project is delayed, possibly until October.

Farnham requested an Executive Session meeting immediately before the next SB meeting on August 3 to discuss Road Crew salaries. There was agreement from the SB to add this to the August 3 meeting.

Road Crew has been doing the 10-hour/4-day work week, though at times they work eight hours and take vacation time to make up the difference.

Public Comment

Fire Department Chief, Greg Light stated that he is disappointed about the lack of information about the lighting for the pedestrian bridge project. His concern is that the lighting can prevent movement of members of the volunteer fire and rescue department from getting to the fire station quickly. Light was troubled that the Fire Department hadn't been contacted directly regarding the arrangements during the Pedestrian Bridge construction and that the East Montpelier Fire Department, which provides town ambulance service, had also not been contacted. Farnham informed Light of the special meeting that was held and that the information about the project is, and has been, on the town website. Light requested contact information for the contractor so that he can have direct access in case of emergency. Farnham agreed to request that information and provide it to Light. Light concluded by stating that all road and traffic issues must be brought to his attention.

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report

Linda Wells was not present and provided a written report, which is transcribed here in italics.

- ♦ **Re-roofing municipal building update**

*I believe I have emailed this info for the municipal building roof job but just in case I have attached the agreement and the two cost sheets for the roof work to this email. The total cost of the work is \$44,078. We have \$88,658 in the Municipal Building Maintenance Fund, ample funds to get this much needed work done. Once approved, please sign the agreement and scan back to me Wednesday morning. Ken Randall plans to start the roof mid-week, weather permitting. **Thayer moved to approve the contract by Randall Contracting, Inc. of Barre for replacement of main and porch roofs for \$44,078.00. The motion was approved unanimously.***

- ♦ Warrants

Please approve the following warrants

*Accounts Payable: 7/7/21 \$550
7/9/21 \$32,305.12
Payroll: 7/09/21
7/16/21*

Farnham moved to approve the warrants and the motion was approved unanimously.

- ♦ Dog Poop Bins/Trash

I just want to once again express my disappointment that the board has done a 360 turn in regard to trash etc. in the village. As you requested, I posted the "Carry In – Carry Out" signs at the Recreation Field and the Mill Street Park and cleaned up the mess left at the Mill Street Park. I then arranged for the highway dept to remove the trash receptacle at the Mill Street Park and moved the "No Littering" sign in the center for better visibility. I appreciate volunteers as much as you but if you are going to have a Carry In – Carry Out, the policy has to include all locations. On the bright side, Mill Street Park has been very clean the few times I have driven by this past week.

- ♦ Reopening our buildings

*There are many people in our town and surrounding towns that have refused to get vaccinated. With the COVID Deviant spreading, the municipal building will continue to require our safety protocol as follows: **Masks must be worn, hands sanitized, and contact tracing including status of COVID vaccinations is required.** The town office window is now open to the community during our regular hours of 7:30am to 12:30 and 1:00 to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Due to our small office space, attorneys, realtors and anyone else needing access to the vault records and other records will still be required to schedule appointments until further notice. Now that our committees will begin meeting again indoors, I request that the board adopt these safety protocols at all town locations.*

- ♦ American Rescue Funds

The board should consider using some of these funds for better air quality in the town hall and have the municipal building ventilation tested as well.

- ♦ Approval of minutes for January 5 and July 6, 2021

This item was moved to the August 3 agenda.

Community Assistance with Dog Poop Bins at Mill Street Park and Recreation Field

Farnham stated that this job has been posted on the town's website, but no one has come forward, so the SB voted to adopt a Carry-In – Carry-Out plan. Alice Merrill reported that she and her husband have been emptying the bins once a week and emphasized that the bin and bags need to be there. She also recommended that the SB contact Positive Pie and thank them for putting trash receptacles in front of their building and request that they urge their customers to use them and not litter.

Thayer requested Merrill's input on the Recreation Field. Merrill would like to have the same dog poo set-up at the Rec Field. Emery noted that there is a green cone anaerobic composter at the Recreation Field exclusively for dog poo. There is a poop scoop with it so no plastic is necessary. Merrill stated that she will increase her monitoring and talk with the other volunteers. Thayer thanked the poo picker uppers. **The SB voted unanimously to replace the dog poo containers and bags at Mill Street Park.**

Planning for Reopening Buildings: Meeting Arrangements for Boards, Committees and Commissions

- ♦ Town Hall Opera House (THOH)

Keith Swann, of Friends of the Town Hall Opera House, reported that the THOH committee agreed to require masks for everyone inside the building. He stated that they would rather require masks than not open the building. Swann requested use of the THOH as a rain location for the upcoming concert on July 31.

Thayer moved that the policy and protocol for re-opening the Town Hall Opera House be that people wear masks and provide contact tracing information on a form that provides an option of allowing the THOH to add them to their mailing list. The motion was approved unanimously.

Thayer moved that the THOH be allowed to use the THOH as backup for outdoor events. The motion was approved unanimously.

Swann requested that the THOH contract be added to the August 3 agenda.

- ♦ Municipal Building

Thayer moved to continue to let Wells set protocol for the use of the Municipal Building. Farnham disagreed with voting on this matter, stating that the SB should be overseeing this matter, taking Wells' recommendations into account. **The motion was approved, with Farnham abstaining.**

- ♦ Town Garage and Water/Wastewater Buildings

Thayer reported that she spoke with the road crew and they would like people to wear masks when they come to the building. **Thayer moved that the same protocol should be applied for the Town Garage and Water/Wastewater Buildings as the Municipal Building. The motion was approved unanimously.**

American Rescue Plan Act/Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery (ARPA) Update & Authorizations

Thayer gave a brief overview, noting that the anticipated amount of funds coming to Plainfield are \$132,116.00 (half in 2021 and half in 2022). The Cutler Memorial Library requested some ARPA funds be used to repave their lot, and Thayer clarified that the funds have limited uses

and paving is not one of them. Emery noted that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) website's homepage clearly explains what the funds can and cannot be used for and reminded the SB that someone from CVRPC can attend a meeting to assist the town with this matter.

Thayer requested that there be a public meeting about the ARPA funds to take public comment about use of funds. **The SB determined that this item will be on the September 7 agenda with a 45 minute to one hour time allotment.**

Brook Road Bridge Replacement Project - Setting Time for Further Consideration of the Project with Community Input

The SB decided to put this item on the August 3 SB meeting agenda and give it a 45-minute time allowance.

Pedestrian Bridge Update Including Construction Traffic Control Plan

Farnham reported that the traffic control plan still hasn't been approved by the Agency of Transportation (AOT). This should happen by this Friday. She hasn't heard from the project engineer. Emery requested that the contractor be asked to remove parking obstructions and turn off flashing red lights until they are ready to begin the project. She noted that the parking obstructions are taking up the best parking for Positive Pie and the Farmer's Market and have already been in place for one week with no construction underway.

Route 2 Intersection

Farnham will get information out to the SB this week about this project. She noted that Erin Parizo, who has been our liaison has taken a new position and will no longer be working with us. **There will be a special meeting on July 27 at 6:00PM in the Municipal Building's office room, which will include a review of the agreement between the Town and State.**

Old Fire House

There will be a meeting to review the project and decide how to proceed with Jay Southgate. Discussion will include the possible sale of the building to Southgate. The meeting is on July 28 at 5:30PM, starting at the Old Fire House and moving to the Recreation Field for discussion, or to the Municipal Building in case of rain.

Bean Road Update

Re Bean Road update section, 3rd paragraph, as I recall, Jim noted that the landowner being on the property is not a violation as long as she's not living there. Also Adam Hochschild insisted that the SB contact an attorney and I responded that we would not get useful advice from doing so unless we are able to provide information as to what witnesses are able to provide evidence of violations by date and contacting an attorney without that information would not be a good use of town funds (or some such). I also asked Adam Hochschild to provide the SB with written statements of his own knowledge of violations by date, time and violation and to encourage others to provide statements to the Select Board as to what they could personally testify to by violation, date and time.

Farnham reported out on her progress. She spoke with someone from Chase and Chase Engineering about what it will take to get new septic at that site. She contacted Downstreet, but hasn't heard back from them. She emailed the landowner and called her two numbers. No reply to the email and both phone numbers are now disconnected.

Christine Ditmeyer requested an update about the Town Health Officer's visit to the site. Volz reported that he sent him an email and didn't get a response, and he saw him and he said that he'd get to it. Volz also noted that the landowner being on the property is not a violation as long as she's not living there.

Conservation Commission Request for Approval of Bellavance Landscaping to Mow Town Forest Trails

Farnham moved to hire Bellavance Landworks clear the trails in the Town Forest for \$420.00. The motion was approved unanimously.

Thayer moved to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously at 8:52PM.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Emery.

Agendas for Upcoming Meetings:

Agenda for July 27, 2021 Special Select Board Meeting, 6:00PM

- ♦ The topic of this meeting is the Route 2-Main Street remediation project
- ♦ update
- ♦ update re current/increased anticipated cost to town for water/wastewater: \$311,000 and financing considerations
- ♦ implications for contract with VTrans
- ♦ re project continuing
- ♦ financial costs to Town if VTrans contract approved, if later decision is to not go forward

Agenda for July 28, 2021 Special Select Board Meeting, 5:30 PM

- ♦ site visit to old Fire House
- ♦ 6:15 continuation of Select Board Meeting at Rec Field (Municipal Building in case of rain)

Agenda Items for August 3, 2021 Select Board Meeting

- ♦ Executive session re road crew compensation-
- ♦ Brook Road Bridge Replacement Project (an hour of this meeting scheduled for this project)
- ♦ financial cost to Town (25% of cost, estimated at \$310,000) implications of delay re project cost
- ♦ payment options for the Town
- ♦ community input re pros and cons of going forward
- ♦ should there be Town vote to authorize going forward?
- ♦ State's responsibility for maintaining rivers/waterways free of debris
- ♦ alternate approaches?
- ♦ timing of project
- ♦ timing of application for FEMA funding (covers 75% of cost)
- ♦ Approval of minutes including January 5, 2021, July 6, 2021 AM, July 6, 2021 PM, and July 20, 2021

Agenda Items for August 17, 2021 Select Board Meeting

- ♦ report from Road Foreman Mike Nolan
- ♦ Continuity of Operations Planning, Grace Vinson, CV Regional Planning Commission
- ♦ American Rescue Plan Act/Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery - an hour of this meeting scheduled to discuss and hear from the community re the use of these funds
 - review of anticipated amount of funds coming to Plainfield: \$132,116 (half 2021 and half 2022)
 - review of restrictions on use of funds and time frame for using funds
 - input from community members, organizations, town departments re best use of funds

Agenda Items for September 7, 2021 Select Board Meeting

- ♦ American Rescue Plan Act funds (45 min to 1 hour)
- ♦ review of regulations re what towns can use American Rescue Plan Act funds for
- ♦ discussion of possible uses of American Rescue Plan Act funds for Plainfield
- ♦ possible decision re all or part of funds (\$132,000)