

Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting
January 25, 2021 at 7PM
Remote-Only Meeting Via Zoom
Approved Minutes

Electronic Participants: Tammy Farnham, Jim Volz, and Sasha Thayer (select board chair), Alice Merrill (community member and grant writer), Keith Swann (community member and Friends of the Town Hall-Opera House), Linda Wells (Town Clerk), Betsy Zeigler (community member), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus).

The meeting started at 7:02pm

Approval of/changes to agenda:

Sasha proposed changing the agenda to include fleet permits and Positive Pie's liquor license renewal. Sasha and Jim agreed to add these items to the agenda.

Announcements:

Sasha made a COVID-19 update regarding vaccinations for those who are 75+. Sasha will add this information to the Plainfield Town website.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Town Meeting Update:

Town Meeting will occur on April 6th, 2021 (postponed from prior date); the deadline for candidates to submit their consent of candidate form is March 1st. At this point it has been established that voting will be done by Australian ballot. Hearings will be held on March 18th and March 30th at 6:30pm (via Zoom – information can be found on the website).

Sasha requested to set up a special meeting to review the select board report, town report and budget. Tammy proposed to meet on **February 3rd at 4:30pm** for a special select board meeting. Tammy mentioned that the report seems very long, and previously it had been requested for everyone to keep to 1-page (8 ½ x 11), this also helps to cut down printing costs. The select board members agreed that it would be feasible to trim down the report to meet the criteria.

Town Clerk/Treasurer Report:

Absentee ballot post cards will be sent out to voters, voters can send the post card back or drop it off at the municipal building to request their ballot. Voters can also come to the polls; the town hall will be open from 9am to 7am on April 6th to vote in person.

REMINDER: The last school tax payment is coming up – due on Wednesday February 10th. Auto-Pay (canceled check & note) can be accepted until Friday January 29th.

Warrants:

Payroll Warrants: 12/18, 12/24, 12/31, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22

Jim moved to approve the payroll warrants with a unanimous approval.

Accounts Payable: 12/30, 1/8, 1/14

Jim moved to approve the accounts payable warrants with a unanimous approval of the select board.

Fleet Permits:

Barrett Trucking Company

Newport Sand & Gravel/Carroll Concrete

Jim moved to approve the fleet permits with a unanimous approval of the select board.

Liquor License Renewal:

Positive Pie

Jim moved to approve the Positive Pie liquor license application with a unanimous approval of the select board.

Connecticut Attorneys Title Insurance Company (“CATIC”) Lawsuit:

Trial date is schedule to start on 1/28/2021 (public hearing). Linda is prepared to give testimony regarding the procedures that were put in place at the municipal building pertaining to COVID-19.

Pedestrian Bridge Project Update:

Tammy shared the exciting news that the lowest bid came back at \$649,790 (Neil Daniels) which includes a 12% contingency. The other bid came back at \$1,178,775 (S.D. Ireland). Andrea will review the bids and bids will be reviewed by VTRANS (within 30 days). Tammy’s recommendation is to set up a special meeting one last time after hearing back from VTRANS to discuss questions and concerns to establish next steps. Tammy advised that the best step would be to move forward rather than waiting to vote. At this point the town needs to pay back \$128,000 if they choose not to move forward with the project. Jim agreed that since the cost is in-line with the initial cost disclosed than it doesn’t seem necessary to vote, as the town meeting will not be held in person. Sasha added that she thinks the conversation should be had with the town’s people to allow for input to establish whether the topic should be voted upon. Linda mentioned that warnings must be submitted by March 7th. Tammy suggested to have a special meeting on February 11th at 6:30pm in hopes of gaining feedback from the community. Eric & Alice iterated concern for the drastic difference in the two project bids. Sasha added that the cost of sidewalk clearing and maintenance might be something to consider and bring forth during the special meeting relating to the pedestrian bridge project.

Route 2 Intersection Project:

Soil samples were obtained and look good at this point. The drilling test results are pending and will be in by the beginning of February. Tammy indicated that the next steps are working with water and waste water to establish how to proceed.

Until the project takes place, Sasha mentioned the idea of working with the state to slow down traffic going through town by adding orange flags (like in East Montpelier), or radar speed signs to draw more attention to the speed reducing to 30mph. Tammy agreed to ask the state about installing radar signs in the interim.

Brook Road Bridge Replacement:

The final report and design will be received at the end of the month. Alice sent a revised schedule to reflect a 2023 construction. Voting on the project will occur in March 2022. Bond payments and financial logistics will be discussed further at a later time. Alice suggested for an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan to be added to the Town of Plainfield website.

Updated Town Plan:

Due to the date that the select board received the revised town plan, the hearing needs to occur before March 16th. Tammy suggested to have the hearing before the regular select board meeting on February 22nd at 6:30pm.

*The 2020 Town Plan is accessible on the Plainfield Town website on the homepage with a link and also on the planning commission page.

Town Hall Opera House:

Sasha mentioned that The Town Hall Opera House has a proposal that they would like to discuss after Town Meeting. Keith mentioned that the front-lower portion will be painted in 2021. The Friends of the Opera house hopes to have an outdoor concert series (at the rec-field or church) in May-June. They are trying to proceed with alternative performance arts. The second fiscal year budget will be discussed with the same proposal of \$1,500. Tammy expressed concern for paying for services that aren't fully rendered due to COVID-19. Tammy reminded that budgeted does not mean expensed, so nothing that was budgeted is guaranteed. Jim and Tammy suggested to take this up at the next select board meeting on February 8th. The use of the Town Hall will be on a case-to-case basis – especially as COVID-19 cases rise and the variant reaches Vermont. Lighting Upgrade: Intending to start the lighting upgrade project in May or June. No additional news.

Agenda Items:

February 3, 2021 – Special Meeting (select board report, town report and 2021-2022 budget)

February 8, 2021

- Route 2 Intersection Project Update
- Pedestrian Bridge Project Update
- Town Hall Opera House
- Gonyeau Road Improvement Request – Mike Nolan
 - Road Update – Mike Nolan
 - Class 4 Road Survey Update (?)

February 11, 2021 – Special Meeting (Pedestrian Bridge)

February 22, 2021

Town Plan Hearing (6:30pm)

Tammy moved to adjourn at 8:55pm, with a unanimous approval of the select board.