

**Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2021
Approved**

Present via Zoom or telephone: Jim Volz, Select Board Chair; Sasha Thayer, Select Board member; Tammy Farnham, Select Board member; Linda Wells, Town Clerk and Treasurer; Eric Blaisdell, *The Times Argus*; Paula Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board; Charles Cogbill.

Agenda

Changes to Agenda

Announcements

Public Comment

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report - Linda Wells

- Approval of warrants

- Approval of minutes

- Authorization for Asst Town Clerk Carol Smith to sign all approved fleet permits

- Approval of fleet permits

- Town meeting planning and publicity

Planning for filling open positions and upcoming vacancies due to retirement

Renewal of Town Hall-Opera House contract with Friends

Update on Main Street bridge problems and repairs and funding options

Update re Pedestrian Bridge construction

Renewal of ask mandate

Health Center gully remediation project

Other business

Jim Volz called the meeting to order at 7:22PM.

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report - Linda Wells

Approval of Warrants

Tammy Farnham moved to approve payroll warrants for January 21 and 28, and an accounts payable warrant for January 21. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

There was discussion about the appropriate level of detail in the minutes. **Tammy Farnham moved to approve minutes for January 18. The motion carried unanimously.**

Authorization for Asst Town Clerk Carol Smith to Sign all Approved Fleet Permits
Sasha Thayer moved to authorize Assistant Town Clerk Carol Smith to sign all approved fleet permits. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Fleet Permits

Sasha Thayer moved to approve fleet permits for Newport Sand and Gravel Co., Inc./Carroll Concrete Co., Inc. of Newport, NH, and Bourne's Inc./Bourne's Propane of Morrisville, Vermont. The motion carried unanimously.

Property Taxes

Linda Wells announced that **property taxes are due on February 9**. They can be dropped off in person at the Town Office during office hours; or dropped in the Town Office drop box at any time of day or night; or sent via US Mail. **Taxes must be received by 4:00PM on February 9, 2022**. If mailed, they should be sent early enough to arrive at the Town Office on or before February 9. If dropped in the drop box, they must be received by 4:00PM on February 9.

Certificate of Highway Mileage

Wells requested that the Select Board review a Certificate of Highway Mileage and approve it and then sign it in person. There were no changes to the certificate from the previous year. It is due February 10, 2022. **Tammy Farnham moved to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage for year ending February 10, 2022. The motion carried.**

Town Meeting Planning and Publicity

Wells shared important information about March 1, 2022 Town Meeting Day:

- Due to COVID, Plainfield is not holding an in-person Town Meeting this year. All voting will be done by Australian Ballot.
- Polling will take place from 7:00AM to 7:00PM at the Town Office at 149 Main Street – not at the Town Hall and Opera House.
- Postcards for requesting absentee ballots were mailed to all voters. Those wishing to use an absentee ballot should complete and return the postcard soon.
- Absentee ballots must be received before 7:00PM on March 1, 2022.
- Absentee ballots can be delivered in person at the Town Office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays before 4:00PM.
- Absentee ballots can be placed in the Town Office drop box any time of day or night before 7:00PM on March 1, 2022, Town Meeting Day.
- Absentee ballots can be delivered by hand during polling hours, between 7:00AM and 7:00PM on March 1, 2022, Town Meeting Day.
- Absentee ballots sent via US Mail should be posted at least a week in advance, as they must be received on or before March 1, 2022.
- Absentee ballots received after March 1, 2022 will not be counted.

Planning for Filling Open Positions and Upcoming Vacancies Due to Retirement

Linda Wells is retiring in September and recommends that the Select Board make the Town Clerk job an appointed position and that they also create an Assistant Treasurer position because the combined position is too much work for one person. Wells also recommended that the new hire begin in June in order to train for the job with her.

Wells would like to advertise the position after Town Meeting. She will draft an advertisement and share it with Select Board members.

Change of Dates for March Select Board Meetings

The first regular Select Board meeting of March is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, which is Town Meeting Day. It needs to be rescheduled. **Sasha Thayer moved to reschedule as follows:**

- ♦ **March 1 meeting rescheduled to March 9 at 7:00PM**
- ♦ **March 15 meeting rescheduled to March 22 at 7:00PM**
- ♦ **The normal meeting schedule will resume in April**

The motion carried unanimously.

Posting of Open Positions

The Select Board discussed holding a special meeting to talk about open positions and steps to take to fill them. **The special meeting to discuss open positions and steps to take to fill them will take place on February 8 at 5:30PM.**

Renewal of Town Hall-Opera House Contract with Friends of the Town Hall and Opera House

The Friends of the Town Hall and Opera House requested that the six-month, July 31 – December 31, 2021 contract be renewed with the same terms, from January 1 – June 30, 2022. **Sasha Thayer moved to renew the July 1 – December 31, 2021 contract, with the same terms, for January 1 – June 30, 2022.** There was discussion about the cost for services provided given the inability to use the building through the COVID pandemic. **Volz and Thayer voted in favor of the motion; Farnham voted against the motion. The motion passed.**

Update on Main Street Bridge Problems, Repairs and Funding Options

Tammy Farnham reported that she is meeting with representatives from VTrans and Daniels Co. on February 2, 2022 to get more information on the condition of the bridge. VTrans will use the information to assist the town with locating funding for repair of the bridge. **Farnham will report out on this at the next meeting.**

Update on Pedestrian Bridge Construction

Tammy Farnham reported that she has forwarded bills to Linda Wells. She also noted that the grant that provided 90% of the funding for the project is finished, so the town has moved to an 80/20% split, with the town paying 20%. She thinks she will receive a change order for the project soon.

Renewal of Mask Mandate

The mask mandate in place lasts for a 30-day period. Thayer noted that she learned, as town Emergency Management Director, that the town is due to receive a shipment of free masks, which will arrive soon. **Sasha Thayer moved to continue the mask mandate for the Town of Plainfield for people meeting in public spaces and private business spaces for another 30 days. The motion carried unanimously.**

The Select Board will revisit this item at the March 9 Select Board meeting.

Health Center Gully Remediation Project

There was discussion regarding changes in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOI), Operation and Maintenance Plan, and Operation and Maintenance Agreement submitted by Christian Meyer of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC). There are discrepancies between these documents and the information provided by Meyer in his presentation to the Select Board related to the town's obligations which require more than the town initially agreed to do. Thayer reported that the town lawyer, Jim Jamele, has the documents and has reviewed them, and that the CVRPC will pay the lawyer fees. **The next steps are: Sasha Thayer will follow up with Meyer, outlining the Select Board's concerns. She will send documents, including the MOI, to Select Board members. Thayer will report back to the Select Board at a future meeting.**

Other Business

Eric Blaisdell requested information about the free masks. **Sasha Thayer will send the information to him and to other Select Board members.**

Jim Volz reminded all that his term on the Select Board is coming to an end and that he will not be at the March meetings.

Sasha Thayer moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:22PM.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Emery.

Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

February 8, 2022

Select Board special meeting to discuss job listings

February 15, 2022 Agenda items

Main Street Bridge Update

Road Foreman Report

Planning for Town Meeting Day

February 22, 2022

Town Meeting Informational Meeting

March 9 Agenda items

Continuity of Operations Planning with Grace Vinson of CVRPC, and Bruce Johnson, East Montpelier Town Administrator

Mask Mandate