

**Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2022**

Approved 6/7/2022

Present: Jim Volz, Select Board Chair; Tammy Farnham, Select Board member; Linda Wells, Town Clerk and Treasurer; Paula Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

Present via Zoom or telephone: George Cushing; Julie Hackbarth; Chellby Colombe; Vic Dwire; Eric Blaisdell, *The Times Argus*; Charles Cogbill; Steven Pappas; Liz Bicknell; Ryan Christiansen; David Diamantis; Karen Bingham; Ki Walker; Susan Grimaldi; Rose Paul

Agenda:

- Executive session pursuant to 3 VSA 313 to discuss personnel and hiring 6:00-7:00PM
 - Changes to Agenda
 - Announcements
 - Public comment
 - Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report
 - Update on filling current and upcoming open positions
 - Approval of fleet permits
 - Approval of warrants
 - Approval of minutes
 - mowing contract
 - approval of the donation/allocation of \$10,000 or Conservation Commission reserve fund
 - clarification and approval of staggered terms of office for Conservation Commission members
 - Grant – letter of support approval
 - Road Foreman Report
 - Update on Main Street bridge problems and repairs, bridge closure decision, and funding options
 - Update re Pedestrian Bridge construction
 - Old Fire House
 - Other business
 - Agenda items for upcoming meetings
 - Adjourn
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Chairman Jim Volz called the public portion of the meeting to order at 7:27 PM.

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

Public comment was taken at the beginning of the Executive Session, there was no additional public comment.

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report

Update on Filling Current and Upcoming Open Positions

Wells reported that there have been many applications on Indeed for the Assistant Clerk/Treasurer position, but the new hire must live in Plainfield, which excluded many applicants. Wells requested that the Select Board interview three applicants, one of which is interested in both positions, stating that she would like the new hire to begin on July 1 so that they can be trained. Wells will send resumes to the Select Board for their review.

Approval of Fleet Permits

Thayer moved to approve fleet permits for the following, and the motion carried.

Donald Moore, Jr. of Barnet, VT
AmeriGas of St. Albans, VT

Approval of Warrants

Farnham moved to approve payroll warrants from May 6, 7, and 14 and accounts payable warrants from May 4, 18, and 19, and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes was moved to the June 7 meeting.

Approval of the Donation/Allocation of \$10,000 of Conservation Commission Reserve Fund to Assist Brickey Brothers Farmland Conservation Project on Upper Road

Rose Paul reported that the Conservation Commission received an application for funds from the Conservation Fund to help with conservation of the Brickey Farm, also known as the McLaren Farm, on the Upper Road because the [Vermont] Land Trust has been asked to put a permanent conservation easement onto the farm by the owners. The total area to be conserved is 162 acres. The total project cost is \$409,000.00. The Vermont Housing Conservation Board has approved a request for \$399,000.00 to purchase the conservation easement. The Land Trust and owners are asking for \$10,000.00 from the Plainfield Conservation Fund to make up the difference. The Conservation Commission has reviewed the application and found that the project meets their requirements for funding and that the application is in alignment with the Town Plan goals of conservation of agricultural and forest land.

Thayer raised a concern that taxes were not paid on the property for three years. Rose Paul clarified that the landowner will receive the funds from the sale and will be able to pay back taxes, and that the landowner can appeal to the town listers to change the assessed value of the property.

Thayer moved that the Select Board make a commitment to make a contribution of \$10,000.00 from the Conservation Fund to the preservation of the property currently owned by the estate of Steve McLaren, and the motion carried.

Mowing Contract

Rose Paul proposed to use Conservation Commission funds to pay for two mowings of the path in the Town Forest. The Conservation Commission would like to mow the path once in early June and again at the end of July in order to manage ticks. The money to pay for the

mowing will come from the Town Forest Fund, the logging of the property, and plant sale proceeds.

Thayer moved to authorize the Conservation Commission to enter into a mowing contract not to exceed \$920.00, and the motion carried.

Clarification and Approval of Staggered Terms of Office for Conservation Commission

Members Thayer clarified the following terms on the Conservation Commission:

- Mary Trerice was reappointed this year with a term ending in 2025
- Serena Matt and Julie Hackbarth were reappointed last year, with terms expiring in 2024
- Becky Atchinson and Rose Paul are serving terms that will end in 2023.

Thayer moved to ratify the above terms and the motion carried.

Letter of Support for Grant

Christian Meyer of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) requested a letter from the Select Board showing support for replacement of Town Bridge 21, which is on Brook Road in the village. Bob Atchinson, Plainfield's representative on CVRPC's Transportation Advisory Committee, worked with Meyer to put the bridge on VTrans' Capital Program. If chosen, funding for replacement of the bridge will be 80% federal, 10% state, and 10% town. The State of Vermont will run the project, including design and construction. The town's expense will be higher if the bridge is replaced using FEMA funding.

Health Center Gully

Meyer noted that he sent the easement agreement from the Mathews' and Health Center's attorneys to the Select Board. The Select Board will review the letter at the June 7 meeting.

Road Foreman Report

Nolan wasn't present. Farnham reported that the Road Crew has been working on ditching on the Gray Road and grading roads.

Update on Main Street Bridge and Pedestrian Bridge Construction

Farnham reported that they are trying to establish the cost of closing the bridge for one month versus keeping one lane open. She detailed the cost of closing the bridge for one month:

- Ambulance – staffed 24/7 and at the village Fire Station at \$80/hour (two people) for one month at \$57,000.00.
- East Montpelier will cover ambulance services on the other side of Route 2
- Fire truck for north side of Route 2 – \$11,000.00 for one month, \$16,000.00 two months

Farnham's next step is to get these numbers to Ross Gowan.

There was discussion about replacing the "No Jumping" sign.

Rose Paul, representing the Board of Directors of the Plainfield Co-op, requested that the Select Board consider providing mitigation funds, possibly from ARPA, to offset the loss of business during bridge closure. Farnham mentioned that people will be able to cross the bridge by foot, but that the connection from Main Street to Route 2 East [in front of the old Hardware Store] will be closed. [Vehicles will not be able to turn left into the village when approaching from the east.] Farnham mentioned that there was discussion about creating a delivery channel from Route 2 to the co-op.

Farnham said that if they choose to do the project with one lane open, it will last for three months, and the area in front of the former Hardware Store will be blocked off for three months.

Thayer noted that the Select Board learned recently that the repair will have more integrity if they can complete it in one month.

Old Fire House

Walker reported that he was informed that the attic of the Old Fire House contains vermiculite that has asbestos in it. He received estimates of \$7,650.00 and \$9,550.00 for asbestos removal and requested that the Select Board decide which bid to go with. David Diamantis, who was present at the meeting, was asked to weigh-in and he urged the town to go with the higher bid because of the containment that Midstate Asbestos Removal offers.

Susan Grimaldi, of the Plainfield Historical Society, stated that testing for asbestos was done recently and that she secured a claim from the vermiculite manufacturer that covers 60% of the cost of removal. She has sent the vermiculite claim information to the Select Board. She noted that the claim has to be submitted by town officials.

It was determined that there is enough money to cover the cost of asbestos removal in the budget, and **Farnham moved to approve the Midstate Asbestos Removal bid of \$9,550.00 to come out of the Municipal Buildings Fund. The motion carried.**

Thayer moved that Volz sign the contract for asbestos removal and the motion carried.

Walker requested that he be compensated for his time in arranging the asbestos removal. He will send a statement to the Select Board.

Grimaldi noted that the maximum reimbursement for Zonolite insulation removal is \$4,270.62 or up to 55% of the abatement cost.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

June 7, 2022

- Approval of easement for Health Center Gully
- Purchase of materials by Road Commissioner
- Vermiculite claim from Susan Grimaldi and Old Fire House
- Plainfield Coop request for reduced rental fee for November event
- Recreation Committee summer program grant update
- Special permit liquor license for event.

At 8:45PM, Thayer moved to go into Executive Session for further consideration of the hiring of a Road Foreman and other personnel issues, per 3 VSA, Section 313. The motion carried and the public portion of the meeting ended.

The meeting returned to public session at 9:18 PM. Sasha Thayer moved that based on additional information the select board received, that we not proceed with one applicant and authorize Jim Volz communicate this to that applicant. The motion passed unanimously.

Sasha moved to authorize Jim Volz to contact the other applicant to offer the position effective July 1st and that the Select Board will have another special another select board meeting 1to finalize hiring after hearing back from the applicant. The motion passed unanimously.

Tammy Farnham moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.