

**Plainfield Select Board Meeting
February 8, 2016
Approved Minutes**

PRESENT: David Strong (Select Board), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Charlie Cogbill (Flood Advisory Committee), Michael Billingsley (Flood Advisory Committee), and Dan Gadd (Flood Advisory Committee).

Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

After adding and tabling items, the agenda was as follows:

- Announcements/Public Comment
- Road Report – Crosswalk - Carnival
- Personnel Policy Revision Adoption
- Pedestrian Bridge Sidewalk Project Update
- Creamery Street Update - Call for Committee Members
- Town Hall Opera House - Management Plan – Rear Addition
- Discussion about Buildings on School Street
- Flood Advisory Committee Report – Change of Mission Discussion
- Woody Debris Situation
- Town Website
- Minutes

Betsy Ziegler made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. David Strong seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Strong announced that ads for the project coordinator position for the Resiliency Project have been submitted to *Seven Days*, *The Bridge*, and the *Times Argus*, noting that Town Clerk Linda Wells has already received 10 inquiries. He cited the deadline for applications as 2/22/16 and recommended appointing an interview committee at the next Select Board meeting. Ann Smith of the Friends of the Winooski has expressed interest in being part of the resource group and suggested that recently hired staff for that organization might be interested in applying for the position.
- Towbin noted that there is interest in setting up a Neighborhood Crime Watch and that further discussion will take place at the next Select Board meeting.
- Towbin reported the arrest of two suspects in the recent robbery of Maplefields on the Plainfield/Marshfield border, and noted that he had sent a note on behalf of Plainfield residents thanking the State Police for their work in the investigation.
- Towbin announced that the new energy charging station, located at the Mill Street Park, is almost at completion and a small opening ceremony to formally initiate it will take place in the next few weeks. He noted that while the Town cannot officially charge users for the electricity (there will be a donation box), Plainfield will benefit by users spending time at area businesses. A sign on Route 2 and a designation on Google Maps will publicize the charging station. Towbin thanked Plainfield

Energy Coordinator Bob Atchinson, who will be present at the next Select Board meeting, for his work on bringing the facility to fruition.

ROAD REPORT – CROSSWALK - CARNIVAL

- Towbin reported that because of the current snowfall, Road Foreman Mike Nolan would not be attending the Select Board meeting, but that department operations are going well.
- Towbin thanked Lamoille Valley Ford for its excellent work in getting a Town truck quickly back into service.
- Ziegler reported that S&D Safety Markings will be addressing the peeling issue of the recently painted crosswalks. Towbin noted that the lines where the electric charging station is located also need to be repainted. Ziegler stated that the bars at the new stops signs that will be installed this spring will need to be painted.
- Towbin reported that he had contacted Amyland Amusements, a company that provides carnival rides and concessions, regarding the possibility of integrating its operations into the established traditions at Plainfield's Old Home Days event in September. Strong noted that the Town would receive 15% of the company's proceeds from the event, which might be earmarked as matching funds for a project to replace the picnic pavilion at the Recreation Field. A recent grant application submitted to the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services to fund that work had been denied due in part to the Town not having the matching funds in hand. It was agreed that reserving the Town's share of Amyland's proceeds at the event for use as matching funds for the new pavilion project would be a good idea.

PERSONNEL POLICY REVISION ADOPTION

- While discussion on the topic was tabled until the next Select Board meeting due to the absence of Mary Lane, who had worked on the revised policy, Towbin reported that the general reception by employees at a recent meeting was favorable.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AND SIDEWALK PROJECT UPDATE

- Strong reported that the project engineers had recently submitted possible bridge designs and estimated costs to the project's advisory committee. In addition to the various styles of bridges, three alternatives for the decking material are: concrete; fiberglass with embedded grit; and steel or serrated grate. The cost range for the bridge itself, not including the abutment, is \$81,000 to \$125,000, and within the \$200,000 budget. Strong presented several examples of potential bridge designs, which the advisory committee will be reviewing to narrow down material and style options. The project is being funded with a \$392,000 VTRANS Bicycle and Pedestrian Program grant with a 10% Town match. If funds bequeathed by the last surviving Batchelder Mill family member are used towards the Town's match, Strong suggested naming the bridge after the family and/or displaying a historical plaque.

CREAMERY STREET UPDATE – CALL FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Ziegler reported that an RFP had been sent out to engineering firms for a study to complete the Lower Village sidewalk network. The work would include new sidewalks on Creamery Street, Brook Road, and a portion of Mill Street to link to the existing sidewalks on Mill and Main Streets with the goal of remedying some of the safety concerns. The RFP applications are due 2/23/16, an award

decision will be made in mid-March, and the Town has about a year to undertake the study. The \$28,000 project grant requires a 10% match. Ziegler put out a call for community members to serve on the project committee to help oversee the effort. A brief discussion followed on the benefits of having residents in that neighborhood participate on the committee and several names were put forth as possibilities.

TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSE - MANAGEMENT PLAN – REAR ADDITION

- Strong reviewed the recently updated management plan for the Town Hall Opera House. The plan includes the early history of the building; more recent issues that warranted its closure in 2011 due to structural and mold concerns; improvements made both inside the building and out that allowed for its reopening a year and a half ago; parking and pedestrian safety issues; operation and maintenance costs; performance space rental revenue and the need for enhancements to expand performance usage; event management; the Advisory Board and Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House; community support; and grant, private, and reserve fund financing of the FY17 and FY18 roof replacement, repair work, and exterior painting.
- Strong presented preliminary elevation and floor plan sketches of the proposed two-story rear addition to the Town Hall Opera House that will help to alleviate the current space limitations for performances. Strong noted that the estimated \$75,000 cost for the addition will not come from taxpayer money, but rather a major capital funds drive, including a cultural facilities grant from the Arts Council, to be conducted by the Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House. Towbin noted that the numerous renovations made to the building have come predominantly through non-taxpayer funding and commended Strong for his work in leading the effort. Strong requested that the Select Board review the updated management plan in preparation for voting on its adoption at the 2/22/16 meeting.
- Strong requested conceptual approval from the Select Board to present for review the draft sketches of the proposed rear addition to the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House to the Plainfield Zoning Administrator and the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation. **Ziegler made a motion to submit the draft plans for the rear addition to the Plainfield Zoning Administrator and the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation for review. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Ziegler made note of the chains needed to help support the spotlights inside the building, which Strong responded were there and ready to be installed.
- Strong reported that Kingdom Construction, Inc. from Newport, Vermont has been awarded the contract for the structural and exterior repair roof work on the Town Hall Opera House and that the language of the agreement has been formulated. Work will begin by 7/1/16 and be completed no later than 10/31/16. **Strong made a motion to approve the agreement with Kingdom Construction for the structural and exterior repair roof work on the Town Hall Opera House. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

DISCUSSION ABOUT BUILDINGS ON SCHOOL STREET

- Strong reported on two properties, both gateway buildings to the Town, whose owners will be putting the properties on the market and have approached the Town about any possible interest in them. One, at the corner of Main Street and Route 2, is owned by Rich and Gaye Christiansen and currently occupied by Local Potion. The other, the old Plainfield Inn, is across the street on Route 2 and owned/occupied by Leon Cookson. Since the Town is interested in how they might be used and

not letting them fall into disrepair, Strong had contacted a representative from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD), who will meet with those interested to discuss possibilities for both properties. Ziegler expressed concerns about several other buildings in and around the Village that are currently unoccupied and going into disrepair and discussion ensued on the complexities involved in addressing the problems. Towbin suggested that when they meet with the ACCD representative, these properties be added to the discussion. Strong recommended being especially proactive on the two aforementioned properties as the owners are currently available and can be dealt with directly.

ADDENDUM TO COMMERCIAL LEASE AGREEMENT

- Towbin requested approval of an amendment to the lease agreement between the Town of Plainfield and its upstairs tenant, the Washington Northeast Supervisory Union, that increases the monthly rent from \$1,230 to \$1,350 effective 7/1/16. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the amendment to the lease agreement between the Town of Plainfield and the Washington Northeast Supervisory Union. Strong seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

ROAD PERMITS AND LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL

- Towbin presented two fleet permit requests: 1) Catamount Forest Products, LLC; and 2) McCullough Crushing, Inc. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the fleet permits for Catamount Forest Products, LLC and McCullough Crushing, Inc. Strong seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Towbin presented a liquor license renewal request for Positive Pie. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the liquor license renewal request for Positive Pie. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

FLOOD COMMITTEE REPORT – CHANGE OF MISSION DISCUSSION

- Ziegler read aloud the proposed mission statement of the Town of Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee as revised and passed by the current Flood Advisory Committee: *The Hazard Mitigation Committee will assist the town by gathering information and developing long term recommendations to mitigate the impact of future flood and other hazard events on public safety and infrastructure. The goal of the Hazard Mitigation Committee is to provide the Selectboard with information and suggestions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risks to human life and property in Plainfield from fluvial erosion/landslide, flash floods/floods, Marshfield dam releases or failure, winter storms, long-term electric outages, hazardous waste spills, forest fires and other identified hazards. The committee will be comprised of no more than seven (7) people who will be appointed by the Selectboard for renewable terms of one or two years. The Selectboard will appoint one of its own members to the Committee. The Committee will select its own officers. Committee meetings will be subject to the Open Meeting Law and minutes will be kept.* Discussion followed on the appropriate number of members on the committee and its responsibility of electing officers. Towbin suggested that the Select Board vote to disband the old committee and commission the new committee. **Strong made a motion to dissolve the Flood Advisory Committee. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** With the former Flood Advisory Committee formally dissolved, **Strong made a motion to commission a Town of Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee with the aforementioned mission statement. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** After a brief discussion on establishing staggered terms for members who will

subsequently be asked their preference to committing to one, two, or three terms, **Strong made a motion to name the following to the new Hazard Mitigation Committee: George Springston, Theresa Bienz, Yoko Kishishita, Michael Billingsley, Dan Gadd, and Bram Towbin. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

WOODY DEBRIS SITUATION

- Towbin reviewed the issue of a large tree that has fallen into the Great Brook upstream of the village and is eroding the riverbank on an adjacent property-owner's land, who would like to have the tree removed. The location of the actual property line is unclear and the Town cannot get drawn in to a property-line dispute thus has no compelling interest in getting involved unless the situation poses a potential problem downstream in the event of a strong torrent of water dislodging the tree. Towbin asked the members of the Hazard Mitigation Committee present to visit the site and consider to what degree they thought the situation of the tree lodged in that particular bend of the river poses a problem for Town infrastructure downstream. There may also be an issue of the road bed at that bend in the river being undermined. Towbin assured residents that the issue is still being explored and any action will be preceded by caution and a full discussion.

TOWN WEBSITE

- Towbin reviewed a proposal to perform website content maintenance from the current website developer, who has bid three hours per month at \$35 per hour based on information being sent for posting to the site. Towbin will further discuss the proposal with the developer and report back at the next meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES

- Strong presented minutes from the 2/1/16 Special Select Board meeting. After a brief discussion noting minor changes, **Ziegler made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/1/16 Special Select Board meeting as amended. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:54pm on a motion by Strong. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff