

**Plainfield Select Board Meeting**  
**May 9, 2016**  
**Approved Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Betsy Ziegler (Select Board), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Ross Sneyd (Select Board), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Jan Waterman (Resident), Art Edelstein (Landowner), Jessica Pike (Resident), Michael Billingsley (Hazard Mitigation Committee), Scott Williams (Washington County State’s Attorney), Garfield Barnes (Resident), and Sarah Albert (Conservation Commission).

**Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.**

The agenda was as follows:

- Announcements/Public Comment
- Town Clerk’s Report
- Road Report: Situation on Hudson Avenue
- Presentation by Scott Williams, Washington County State’s Attorney
- Summary of Meeting at Marshfield Dam
- Summary of Preliminary Resiliency Meeting, Call for Members
- Summary of Bus Shelter Placement
- Planning Commission: Update on New Zoning
- Town Website: Discuss Strategy for Improvement
- Approve Minutes

Betsy Ziegler requested that Approval of Purchase of Recycling Bins be added to the above agenda. Towbin noted that Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells was ill thus there would be no Town Clerk’s Report. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Ross Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Ziegler requested that discussion of the Trails Grant for the Town Forest as an additional item to be added to the agenda. **Sneyd made a motion to amend the agenda to include discussion on the Trails Grant for the Town Forest. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Ziegler announced that a kickoff meeting for the year-long Lower Village Sidewalk Study had been held last week. The committee will present proposed plans for the project at the 6/13/16 Select Board meeting, which will be held at the Town Hall Opera House. The project is currently in the discussion phase and public input is requested. Upon completion of the study, next steps might be to apply for grant funding.
- Towbin noted plans to hire a grants administrator, the details of which will be discussed at the next Select Board meeting. Towbin explained that project-management monies come, in many cases, from the grant awards themselves thus will have minimal impact on the taxpayers.
- Ziegler thanked all the volunteers who participated in last week’s Green Up Day and briefly overviewed the resources and activities that went into cleaning up roads, trails, and other areas

throughout Plainfield. Volunteers included students from the high and middle schools. Towbin noted that the lead organizer for Vermont's Green Up Day, Melinda Vieux, is a Plainfield resident and thanked her along with the Plainfield Conservation Commission for their work in coordinating the effort.

- Towbin described the Rain Garden at the Mill Street Park that captures sediment so that it does not run into the Winooski River. Because the standing water can create a breeding habitat for mosquitos and other dangerous pathogens, there will be discussion on what action might be taken to address the situation.
- Towbin thanked the Vermont State Police, specifically Trooper Stackhouse, for apprehending the person responsible for many of the area's burglaries, including the break-in at the Blinking Light Gallery. Towbin noted progress being made on investigating other area robberies.
- Towbin announced that a Development Review Board site visit will take place on 5/11/16 at 6:15pm at the proposed relocation of the GMTA bus shelter on Route 2 by the Post Office. The site visit will be followed by a hearing at 7pm at the Town Office building.

#### **ROAD REPORT**

- Art Edelstein, who owns a house he rents out at 48 Hudson Avenue, presented his concerns over an issue impacting his property, citing the cause, as identified by an engineering company, to be the result of water running off from Hudson Street onto his property that has consequently eroded the ground under his porch and walkway. The estimated repair cost is \$1,250 with a minimum of an additional \$500 to re-asphalt the walkway for a total of \$1,750. Edelstein presented photos of the area, noting that the engineering company has pinpointed the cause of the problem to be the absence of a properly constructed drainage ditch, or swale. Stating that because the Town has done little to prevent the issue from happening by not maintaining the ditch, the Town is culpable for the damage and Edelstein is requesting compensation in the amount of \$1,750 to fix the problem. Towbin, speaking as the Plainfield Road Commissioner, noted that he had met with Road Foreman Mike Nolan early the next morning after learning of the problem, who both then went to the location and dug out the ditch. Towbin stated that the situation is not unique, with many houses throughout the Town sited in locations that pose challenges in road maintenance, especially older dwellings that today would not meet zoning regulations. Towbin further stated that the engineering study did not mention the water running off the roof of the house itself that contributes to the problem. Towbin recommended that grading the ditch should become part of a regular maintenance regime to help address the problem, but that it was not possible for the Town to assume the cost of repairs. Discussion ensued with points being made on each side, resulting in the plan that Sneyd and Ziegler will make a site visit and report back at the next Select Board meeting to hopefully come up with a negotiated solution.

#### **PRESENTATION BY SCOTT WILLIAMS, WASHINGTON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY**

- Washington County State's Attorney Scott Williams, who is visiting every Select Board in the County to introduce himself, defined the position of State's Attorney and gave an overview of his tenure since taking office in February 2015. Williams described the types of crimes his office deals with, including DUIs, homicides, assaults, drug cases, fish and game violations, traffic-ticket appeals, and truancies. His office has cleared out a backlog of cases since he took office. Stating the importance of towns knowing who their law-enforcement resources are, Williams cited the names of his

deputies, noting their specific areas of expertise. He spoke about his office's progressive sentencing philosophy in giving young people opportunities to learn from their mistakes by coming up with a corrective structure that allows for them to still have a shot at a successful future. He noted the failure of addressing school truancy in his first year in office and hopes to be moving toward a better system in the next year that includes improved interaction between case workers and families. Williams cited that his office had 100% trial wins in 2015 with a slightly lower success rate thus far this year. He noted that every community in Washington County has a drug problem that is bigger than most people think. In addition to interacting with people bringing in and distributing drugs in Vermont, his office is working to take a public health approach to the viral effect of drug crimes, including a Treatment Court that has had decent success, but could be a lot better with improved staffing and resources. Williams finished his presentation by stating that one of his biggest goals over the next few years is to have a county-specific drug intelligence and interdiction model, meaning collaboration between different law-enforcement entities—federal, state, and local—to better target where the product is coming in, along with other interventions. Towbin noted two examples in Plainfield where he believes stronger legal action needs to be taken toward individuals who have become emboldened by the lack of fierce prosecution regarding their known patterns of violence and intimidation. Williams suggested coming back with an investigator from his office for a meeting to specifically discuss how to address these situations. Additional discussion followed on various issues, including forced drugging of incarcerated people awaiting trial; the potential, through some kind of communications vehicle, to provide guidance on steps to take by those who witness suspicious behavior in a community that has experienced a rash of drug-driven crimes; and the idea of community-adjudicated courts for low-level criminal behavior correction. Williams concluded by stating his hope is to visit towns in Washington County once a year to listen to and record residents' grievances.

#### **SUMMARY OF MEETING AT MARSHFIELD DAM**

- Towbin noted that one of the major threats identified by Plainfield's Hazard Mitigation Committee is the potential of the Marshfield Dam to fail during a major storm event. The issues include both concerns about the dam's infrastructure and the manual operation of the flood gates. The recent meeting included representatives from Green Mountain Power (GMP) and plans are to hold a follow-up meeting to go through the emergency plan to ensure that everything has been carefully considered, including communications, in the event of an emergency situation. Investment in infrastructure will be discussed regarding installing a more automated, modern system of operating the flood gates. Hazard Mitigation Committee member Michael Billingsley added additional details, including conducting an exercise simulating an event actually underway to determine the accessibility of highway routes, evacuation plans, and movement of emergency equipment. He noted his requests to GMP to fund the creation of more accurate inundation maps, to alert the towns to a dam failure or that a large amount of water is about to be released, and to support towns in developing emergency, communications, and evacuation plans. Sneyd made clear that the dam is currently safe. Towbin agreed, however, noted that the problem is with increasingly powerful weather events that warrant upping the game in terms of preparing for the worst.

## **SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY RESILIENCY MEETING, CALL FOR MEMBERS**

- Ziegler reported on a recent meeting of the Resilience Awareness and Action Project Committee, where the group met new Project Coordinator Sarah McShane and discussed what the committee might be doing as a group over the next year. The committee is hoping to involve more members of the community and members will be attending a Resiliency workshop at Norwich University on 5/20-21 to learn about what other communities have done in the area of resiliency. Anyone interested in joining the committee and/or attending the workshop should contact Ziegler, David Strong, or Sarah McShane. Ziegler added that no expertise is required of those who join the committee and that there will be opportunity for community members to participate in a lot of different ways. Plans are to conduct a survey over the summer to determine some of the concerns in the community after which the committee will begin to meet with experts to decide on projects to undertake.

## **PURCHASE OF RECYCLING BINS**

- Referring to new Vermont rules regarding the management of waste, Towbin reported that all any place where there is a publicly provided trash receptacle, the location also needs to include a recycling component. Ziegler presented her recommendations for purchasing recycling bins, the cost of which, up to \$150, will be covered by a grant from the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District. Towbin put out a call for volunteers to help empty the trash receptacle at the Mill Street Park. Discussion followed on the possibility of siting recycling bins at the Park and Ride. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the \$153.12 purchase of various recycling bins. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Ziegler requested that the item of identifying people to help empty the recycling bins be included in a future agenda. Ideas presented by residents in attendance included capturing litterers in the act via cameras and following up on Green Up Day with various volunteers who had wanted to sort through collected trash that day for items to recycle.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION: UPDATE ON NEW ZONING**

- Towbin noted that the Town of Plainfield is updating its Zoning Regulations and the Select Board would like to schedule its public hearing on it by August so a final vote can be included during the Primary Election on 8/9/16. In conversations with Will Colgan, head of the Planning Commission, Towbin cited the major changes to the Zoning Regulations will be one document containing zoning, subdivision, and flood hazards with changes most impacting those properties in the new flood hazard zone. Those with ideas, questions, or concerns should contact Colgan at plainfieldpc@gmail.com, call his cell phone at 793-2836, or contact any of the Planning Commission members.

## **SUMMARY OF BUS SHELTER PLACEMENT**

- Towbin announced a meeting being held on 5/11/16 about the placement of the relocated bus shelter on Route 2 in front of the Post Office. Concerns include the fact that most of the people using the bus are going westbound, which involves crossing Route 2 to board the bus. Noting that he is not taking a position on it, Towbin stated that there is a designated VTRANS-approved walkway with signs.

#### **TRAILS GRANT FOR THE TOWN FOREST**

- Conservation Commission member Sarah Albert noted that the Conservation Commission had received a Recreation Trails grant to set up two trailhead parking areas at the Town Forest, one at the end of Maxfield Road and the other at the end of Gonyeau Road. Albert had emailed the Select Board a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for review to be sent out to contractors. She noted the inclusion of insurance requirement language in the document. An 8:00am meeting at the Town Office will be held on 5/17/16 for contractors who have questions regarding the work with 6/6/16 as the deadline for submitting bids. Albert stated she can meet contractors who wish to visit the sites. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the revised language in the RFP. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **APPROVAL OF FLEET AND SINGLE VEHICLE PERMIT REQUESTS**

- Towbin presented the following Fleet Permit and Single Vehicle Permit requests for approval:
  - Cardinal Logistics Management Corp. (Fleet)
  - Greg A. Bartlett (Fleet)
  - Donald Moore, Jr. (Single)

**Ziegler made a motion to approve the above listed Fleet and Single Vehicle Permit requests as listed above. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **APPROVAL OF LIQUOR PERMITS**

- Towbin presented the following Liquor Permit requests for approval:
  - Three Penny Taproom to cater an event at Black Bear Biodiesel on 6/4/16

**Sneyd made a motion to approve the Liquor Permit request for Three Penny Taproom to cater an event at Black Bear Biodiesel on 6/4/16. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

- Three Penny Taproom to cater an event at the Haybarn Theater at Goddard College on 5/21/16

**Sneyd made a motion to approve the Liquor Permit request for Three Penny Taproom to cater an event at the Haybarn Theater at Goddard College on 5/21/16. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **APPROVE MINUTES**

- Ziegler presented minutes from the 4/25/16 Select Board meeting. With a minor correction, **Ziegler made a motion to approve the minutes from the 4/25/16 Select Board meeting as amended. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

**The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm on a motion by Ziegler. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff