

Plainfield Select Board Meeting
June 27, 2016
Approved Minutes

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Joe Staab (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Gary Graves (Resident), Kevin Geiger (Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission), George Cushing (Resident), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Dave Strong (Plainfield Town Hall Opera House), Sarah Albert (Conservation Commission), Jim Jamele (Plainfield Town Attorney), Adam Hochschild (Resident).

Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

AGENDA

- Announcements/Public Comment
- Town Clerk's Report
- Road Report
- Kevin Geiger, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, Cameron Road Buyout
- Sarah Albert, Town Forest Trailhead Project
- Gallison Property Across from Town Hall Opera House, Discussion of Possible Town Purchase, Review Purchase and Sale Agreement
- Approval of Right-of-Way (ROW) Permit Language
- Recycling Bins
- Minutes
- Adjourn

Betsy Ziegler made a motion to accept the agenda as set forth. Ross Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Towbin announced that the Hazard Mitigation Committee will hold a public discussion at 7pm on 6/29/16 at the Town Hall Opera House to review the alternatives from the Milone and McBroom report regarding what actions to take on the two bridges spanning the Great Brook in the Village.
- Ziegler announced that the Resiliency Committee will hold a meeting at 6:30pm on 6/29/16 at the Town Offices to review the draft survey soon to be sent out to the community.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Town Clerk Linda Wells presented a grant from the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation for the Forest Trailhead and two bid document for the work to be performed at the two sites. Discussion on these items was tabled until later in the meeting when Conservation Commission member Sarah Albert was expected to be present.

- Wells presented an invoice received from Dubois Construction for completion of the work at the base of Cameron Road, which will be discussed at a special meeting next week after Road Foreman Mike Nolan has had a chance to review.
- Wells noted an email correspondence with the Washington County Sheriff's Office regarding the decrease of violations issued and the subsequent decrease in income received by the Town. Noting that incidents of speeding have not decreased, Towbin stated he would contact the Sheriff's Office about what can be done to better address the problem.
- Wells presented a dog warrant for Select Board approval to be given to the Animal Control Officer stating follow-up actions regarding unregistered dogs in the Town. Towbin noted that the issue would be taken up later in the meeting.

ROAD REPORT

- Road Foreman Mike Nolan noted that L&D Safety Marking was scheduled to come tomorrow to paint stop lines for new stop signs that will be posted entering the Village where Brook Road meets Creamery Street and where Main Street meets Creamery Street, with the intended effect of slowing down traffic. Discussion followed on the need for enforcement, which Towbin will discuss with the Washington County Sheriff. Ziegler presented Nolan with a map illustrating where the new stop lines should be placed. Culvert work on Recreation Field Road will be performed later in the week.
- Towbin noted a request by a resident to run a power line underneath a road. The request has been withdrawn, but Road Commissioner Towbin and Nolan have decided to develop a more formal process to grant Right-of-Way (ROW) permit requests. Nolan noted potential problems with power lines running under roads, especially those not paved, during road work. Further discussion on the issue would take place later in the meeting when an interested resident was present.
- Nolan noted that there were still a few roads that needed to be graded and that he needs to order more chloride. Discussion followed on work to be done on Country Club Road, Nolan's review of work done on Cameron Road, and a price from Casella for a once-a-month pick up of recycling at the Town Garage, the latter of which will be further discussed at the next meeting.

KEVIN GEIGER, TWO RIVERS-OTTAUQUECHEE REGIONAL COMMISSION, CAMERON ROAD BUYOUT

- Towbin introduced Kevin Geiger from Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission (TRORC), an expert on buyouts, and explained the situation on Cameron Road. When the house was built 12 years ago, it was 50-60 yards from the Great Brook, but now the garage is less than a foot from a 75-foot drop down to the Great Brook and the house itself is about 15 feet from the cliff face. The house is not in a position to be moved, thus planning began about a year ago to remove the structures before they fell into the river. Towbin noted that there is skepticism about the Town putting any tax dollars into remediating the situation, but if the house is allowed to fall into the river, which could happen very soon, there may be a severe impact on taxpayers. There are also concerns about danger to first responders dealing with the house should it fall. Geiger explained that TRORC's funding is a blend of Community Development Block Grant money from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Geiger described the financial buyout structures with and without FEMA involvement, noting that with very few exceptions, the buyer and subsequent owner of the property is the municipality. The Town's costs, which are reimbursed by TRORC, include title work, legal fees in preparing closing documents, asbestos assessment (and removal, if necessary), all costs associated with demolition,

and any river bank stabilization measures. Discussion followed on the Town's cash flow in terms of fronting some of the costs prior to reimbursement, the process timeframe, coverage of the Town's administrative costs in management and oversight, and the assessed price of the property. If the Town wishes to move forward, a grant agreement needs to be signed with TRORC. **Sneyd made a motion to work with Kevin Geiger from Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission for the buyout of the property at 280 Cameron Road. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

SARAH ALBERT, TOWN FOREST TRAILHEAD PROJECT

- Conservation Commission member Sarah Albert reviewed the project regarding two Town Forest trailhead facilities, one on Maxfield Road and one on Gonyeau Road, that include parking areas for cars, barriers to prevent vehicles from getting onto the trails, and kiosks at both entrances. Two bids have been received: \$13,500 from Gene Bowen of Calais; and \$11,177 from Stone Hammer of Marshfield. Because the lowest bid came in above the amount budgeted, there may be costs to the Town, which may be mitigated by downsizing the lot at Gonyeau Road and/or using higher-than-expected revenue from the timber sale from last fall's logging operation at the Town Forest. **Towbin made a motion to authorize hiring Stone Hammer at \$11,177 for the work at the two trailheads to the Town Forest. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Towbin noted Albert's reporting of people lighting fires in the log landing on Gonyeau Road and advised Albert to contact both the State Police and Town Constable George Cushing if any more incidents occur.

GALLISON PROPERTY ACROSS FROM TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSE, DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE TOWN PURCHASE, REVIEW PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT

- Towbin gave an overview of the issue regarding the house at 25 High Street, located directly across Route 2 from the Town Hall Opera House, which has fallen into disrepair and which the Town is considering purchasing to add needed parking for events at the Town Hall Opera House. Towbin noted strong public sentiment on both sides regarding the potential purchase. George Cushing stated his and others' viewpoint that if ample event parking resulted from the purchase of the property, there would be no need to build the planned pedestrian bridge coming up from the Village. Noting the dangerous situation at the intersection of Route 2 and Main Street coming out of the Village, Towbin explained the leveraging value of proceeding with the Pedestrian Bridge Project, which would put additional pressure on the State to fund the multi-million dollar project needed to address the safety issues at that intersection. Dave Strong noted that the Town-adopted management plan for the Town Hall Opera House had identified pedestrian safety and lack of parking as two issues needing to be addressed and that the planned Pedestrian Bridge project will provide for safe passage of pedestrians coming up from the Village and crossing Route 2 and acquiring the 25 High Street property will add to the availability of event parking. Discussion followed on costs associated with evaluating the condition of the house, including lead and asbestos inspection and remediation, once the purchase and sale agreement is signed, and how those costs will be covered; the Town's option to withdraw from the deal and receive a full refund on the \$2,000 deposit if an inspection of the house indicates it is not worth purchasing or if voters choose not to support the purchase; and the time required to schedule the Town vote and produce payment for the deposit and inspection fees. Towbin and Sneyd pledged donations of \$100 each

towards inspection costs. **Sneyd made a motion that the Town enter into a purchase and sale agreement for the property at 25 High Street in the amount of \$70,000 and that the closing date be changed from 9/1/16 to 11/1/16. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Immediately following, **Sneyd made a motion to request \$4,000, \$2,000 for the purchase and sale agreement deposit and up to \$2,000 for the asbestos and other inspections, from the Town's revolving loan fund. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

APPROVAL OF RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW) PERMIT LANGUAGE

- Towbin noted a recent request made by Plainfield resident Adam Hochschild to run a power line under a Town road, which has since been withdrawn. Towbin and Road Foreman Mike Nolan, however, had decided to develop a more formal process for such requests in the future. Draft language was drawn up based on a model used by the neighboring Town of Marshfield that includes requirements safeguarding the Town while not putting an undue burden on the landowner. Discussion followed regarding details related to Hochschild's situation and various suggested modifications to the requirements in the draft text. It was decided that the Select Board and others would wait to better digest the draft language before finalizing and voting on it.

WEBSITE TO PROMOTE THE TOWN

- Towbin announced that he had developed a website (www.plainfieldvt.com) to help promote businesses and institutions in Plainfield and is looking to add additional entities to those he has so far included.
- Ziegler noted that she has made notes on improvements to the Town of Plainfield's website. Sneyd asked about the budget available for the Town's website so as to better understand what the options are going forward. Towbin stated that it would be discussed at the upcoming budget meeting.

RECYCLING BINS

- Ziegler reported on new recycling bins now in use at the Mill Street Park, the Town Hall Opera House, and the Town Office building. Options are being considered for what to do at the Town Garage and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. There is a need to identify a general collection and removal strategy for recyclable materials generated at various public areas. Ziegler clarified that the bins are not large enough to accommodate personal recycling by community members and discussion followed on how that issue might be addressed. Ziegler also presented draft graphics that will be affixed to the bins indicating what items can be recycled.

DOG ORDINANCE LANGUAGE

- Ziegler read aloud the language in the ordinance authorizing the Animal Control Officer to follow up with those whose dogs or wolf hybrids have not been duly licensed according to law. The ordinance was approved and signed by the Select Board.

MINUTES

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/6/16 Special Select Board meeting as written. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/13/16 Select Board meeting as written. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

OTHER

- Towbin noted a Public Service Board memorandum on new legislation about the process of siting renewable energy projects.
- Towbin noted that there is a VTRANS grant available for another bus shelter.
- Towbin reminded Sneyd to follow up on the letter to the landowner of the Hudson Avenue property citing the Select Board's decision on the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35pm on a motion by Ziegler. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff