

**Town of Plainfield, Vermont**  
**Select Board Meeting**  
**February 24, 2020**  
**Draft Minutes**

**PRESENT:** James Volz (Select Board Member), Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Chair), Tammy Farnham (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Allan Farnham (Resident), Scott Burbank (VHB), Nina Truslow (VHB), Michael Billingsley (Resident), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Baylen Slote and baby Rosa (Residents), Alice Dworkin (Resident), Jess Taylor (Resident), Bram Towbin (Road Commissioner), Jamie Spector (Recreation Committee), and Ben Youngbaer (Recreation Committee).

**Alexandra Thayer called the Select Board meeting to order at 7:01pm.**

**AGENDA**

- Review Agenda
- Public Comment/Announcements
- Town Clerk's Report
  - Town Meeting Update
  - Further Review of Budget 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 RE: Continuing Filming and CCTV Posting of Plainfield Select Board Meetings - Citizen Requests that Filming Be Continued
- Road Commissioner's Report
  - Loader Update and Replacement Authorization
- Brook Road Bridge Update - VHB, Jason Keener
- Pedestrian Bridge Project Update
- Route 2/Main Street Intersection Update
  - Designation of Select Board Member as AOT Contact
- Recreation Committee - Jamie Spector, Ben Youngbaer
- Hitching Post Letter of Support
- Approval of Select Board Meeting Minutes of 1/13/20
- Other Business
- Agenda Items for 3/9/20 Meeting
  - Brook Road Bridge Update - VHB
  - Appointments
- Adjourn

**REVIEW AGENDA**

- There were no changes made to the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Thayer stated that Town Meeting will be held on 3/3/20. Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells noted that voting by Australian ballot will take place between 9:00am and 7:00pm, and that Town Meeting will begin at 10:00am.

- Thayer noted that there will be a RAMP Energy Innovations workshop on 2/27/20 from 7:00-8:00pm at the Old Schoolhouse Common in Marshfield.
- Michael Billingsley stated that the proposed Order and Findings for the Marshfield #6 Certificate of Public Good sought by Green Mountain Power was sent out a few weeks ago to all the parties, including Plainfield. Today is the deadline to file a response to propose any changes. Billingsley responded today, suggesting that the hearing officer's ruling be modified to include the wording of the hearing officer's own Item #56 and adding that because Plainfield is one of the affected towns, that as the construction emergency action plan is created, copies of it be provided to each of the participating towns for response and amendments, if necessary.

## **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

- **TOWN MEETING UPDATE**
- **FURTHER REVIEW OF BUDGET 2019-2020 AND 2020-2021 RE: CONTINUING FILMING AND CCTV POSTING OF PLAINFIELD SELECT BOARD MEETINGS - CITIZEN REQUESTS THAT FILMING CONTINUE**
- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells reported that a reimbursement check for \$3,158.83 for work on the Highway Department's Ford truck had been received as a result of Tammy Farnham's intervention that subsequently reversed Ford's denial of a warranty claim.
- Wells presented a reimbursement request to send to VTRANS for the Main Street Pedestrian Bridge project, noting that most of the work had been done through the time Pat Travers was the project manager. After a question from Thayer regarding the remaining project management budget, Farnham requested to look at the Dufresne Group's most recent proposal to see where the cost overages are. **Farnham made a motion to approve the reimbursement request to VTRANS for \$10,571.53. The motion was approved.**
- Wells noted that Town Reports were mailed out on 2/21/20.
- Wells reported that set-up plans are currently underway at the Town Hall Opera House for Town Meeting. She noted that the configuration will be different this year to separate out the voting area from the floor seating and to accommodate some new equipment. Thayer noted that it is a presidential primary and asked that anyone interested in helping to count ballots after the polls close contact Wells.
- **Farnham made a motion to approve a catering permit for Positive Pie's concert at the Town Hall Opera House on 3/14/20. The motion was approved.**
- **James Volz made a motion to approve warrants of 2/14/20, 2/18/20, 2/21/20, and 2/22/20. The motion was approved.**
- **Farnham made a motion to approve fleet permits for: 1) Allen Lumber; 2) Lajeunesse Construction, Inc.; 3) Suburban Propane; and 4) Weston Pulpwood Sales, Inc. The motion was approved.**
- Thayer noted that in a recent conversation with Central Vermont Television's (CVTV's) Tony Campos regarding videotaping Select Board meetings, Campos had stated that the Town gets one free videotaping per month. This would mean that there would probably be enough in the budget to pay for videotaping the second meeting each month through the end of the fiscal year if the recording could be placed on a thumb drive, chaptered, and posted to YouTube through a link on the Town's website. Thayer added that CVTV's board of directors, which is scheduled to meet in March, first needs to approve it. Farnham noted that it is also possible to record and chapter meetings using a phone. Discussion continued with Michael Billingsley stating that he is using a real-time transcription device to record tonight's meeting; however, someone would still need to take minutes to correct any errors in the transcription. It was decided that the videotaping would continue through March while other options are explored.

## **ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

### **- LOADER UPDATE AND REPLACEMENT AUTHORIZATION**

- Road Commissioner Bram Towbin reported that the Road Crew is looking at and weighing different options for the loader, brands of which currently include Komatsu, John Deere, Caterpillar, and Volvo. It was decided that Towbin will provide an update at the 3/9/20 Select Board meeting.
- Towbin noted that ice coming off of the roof of the fire station was removed to prevent it from coming down onto parked cars.
- Towbin reported that the supply and quality of sand being used on the roads is satisfactory.
- Regarding the proposed project to address the gully erosion behind the Plainfield Health Center, Towbin noted that Road Foreman Mike Nolan had stated that instead of the Road Crew cleaning out the proposed sediment-collection pond, which would need to be done approximately every eight years, hiring an excavating contractor to do that work would be more efficient. Towbin stated that there would be no cost to the Town for building the project, but estimated that hiring a contractor to perform the maintenance would be \$1,800-\$2,500. Discussion followed, including the burden that the State is placing on towns to address water quality issues; fees associated with the General Road Permit; the Town's involvement with a project on private property; a similar project in Barre City where it is working on a water issue on private property; using the Town's participation in the \$300,000 project as leverage in terms of expected fees in the future; changes in the Town's maintenance role from when the project was initially proposed; the possibility that the Town doing work on this private property obligates it to do similar work on other private properties; gaining a better understanding of the increasing requirements that the State is imposing on municipalities; whether the water causing the erosion is coming from the Health Center property; and the possibility of other towns that use the Health Center contributing to the maintenance cost.

### **BROOK ROAD BRIDGE UPDATE - VHB, JASON KEENER**

- Scott Burbank and Nina Truslow were present from VHB to provide an update on the Brook Road Bridge project. Burbank asked for clarification regarding whether the Town was considering the option of either doing nothing with the current bridge or removing it without replacement, to which Thayer and Farnham responded that neither was an option. Truslow reviewed the four alternatives for bridge replacement, each with piles versus footing options: 1) pre-stressed concrete slab; 2) pre-stressed concrete next D beam; 3) steel beam with concrete deck; and 4) three-sided concrete box or arch. Discussion included the possibility of installing rip rap farther upstream from the bridge and/or a debris catcher; hydrological issues versus bridge structure and stream bed modifications included in the project; property rights needed from adjacent land owners and a \$10,000 line item included in each alternative for right-of-way issues; potential impacts of a flood event during construction; that all alternatives include natural stream beds; and bridge clearance. Burbank stated that the process from here was for the Town to choose an alternative, followed by the creation of a final design, and figuring out grant applications. Michael Billingsley from the Hazard Mitigation Committee offered to host a special community meeting to present alternatives, obtain feedback, and report back to the Select Board, to which the Select Board had no objection.

### **PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE PROJECT UPDATE**

- Farnham reported that six applications had been received for the supervising engineer, which will be reviewed on 2/27/20. Thayer noted that the deadline for construction bids had been delayed for a week because of questions raised at the pre-bid conference. They will be opened on 2/28/20 at 3:00pm, after which they will be forwarded to the engineering firm to see if they comply with the engineering specifications.

## **ROUTE 2/MAIN STREET INTERSECTION UPDATE**

### **- DESIGNATION OF SELECT BOARD MEMBER AS AOT CONTACT**

- Thayer stated that Water/Wastewater Department Chief Facility Operator Greg Chamberlin had requested to speak directly with someone from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT) with expertise in water/wastewater issues, a connection that Project Manager Erin Parizo was able to make. **Volz made a motion that Alexandra Thayer continue to act as the contact person with VAOT. Farnham added the stipulation that Thayer copy Farnham and Volz on correspondence and notify them of meetings that take place between Thayer and VAOT. The motion was approved.**

## **RECREATION COMMITTEE - JAMIE SPECTOR, BEN YOUNGBAER**

- Jamie Spector and Ben Youngbaer were present from the Recreation Committee to explain a proposed project at the Recreation Field. Ninety percent of respondents to a recent survey indicated that they were in favor of pursuing building a new climbing structure for the 5-11 age group. Because of the regulations surrounding climbing structures, a licensed contractor specializing in playgrounds would be needed. The Recreation Committee has begun speaking with Leathers & Associates, which has an office in Ithaca, New York. The company uses recycled materials and offers a 50-year warranty. The initial design phase would include a two-day visit by a designer from the company who would look at the proposed site, meet with the Recreation Committee, host a community design event, produce a CAD mock-up design based on the feedback at the event, and develop a budget. The initial project design phase would cost approximately \$1,900, and based on a 50-by-50 foot area and using a community-build process, the construction cost is estimated at \$90,000. An organizing group beyond the Recreation Committee itself would need to be established, which would explore funding for the climbing structure. Several potential funding sources have been identified. Thayer asked that information be gathered to calculate what level of insurance would be needed, which would be an ongoing expense to the Town, as well as any maintenance requirements. Discussion followed, including types of surface materials; the number of children in the Town and others who use the Recreation Field; planting a tree to climb rather than constructing a plastic structure; considering it to be a destination-type project to attract more people into Plainfield; preserving the swimming area by the Recreation Field at the confluence of the Great Brook and the Winooski River by installing a debris catcher upstream; obtaining the current budget figures for the Recreation Committee and identifying other funds that might be used toward the project; paying part of the cost in one fiscal year and part in another; and further evaluation of other project options before moving forward with such a huge investment. Spector will share the survey results with the Select Board and the issue will be taken up again at the 3/23/20 Select Board meeting.

## **HITCHING POST LETTER OF SUPPORT**

- Thayer will share the proposed letter in support of the Hitching Post with Volz and Farnham, and the issue will be added to the agenda for the 3/9/20 Select Board meeting.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

- Thayer will send Volz and Farnham of list of upcoming appointments.

## **ADJOURN**

- **Volz made a motion to adjourn at 9:06pm. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff