

**Town of Plainfield
Select Board Meeting
July 23, 2018
Approved Minutes**

PRESENT: Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Member), Tammy Farnham (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer, Friends of the Town Hall Opera House), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Bram Towbin (Road Commissioner), Mel McKnight (Resident), Laura Ziegler (Pedestrian Bridge Project Advisory Committee), Charles Cogbill (Resident), Pat Travers (Pedestrian Bridge Project Manager), Alice Merrill (Grant Administrator), Tim Phillips (Pedestrian Bridge Project Advisory Committee), Edward Hutchinson (Resident), and Bob Atchison (Energy Coordinator).

Alexandra Thayer called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

AGENDA

- Review Agenda
- Public Comment and Announcements
- Town Clerk's Report and Warrants
- Road Report
- Appointments: Emerald Ash Borer Task Force - Nicko Rubin, Bram Towbin, Others? Twinfield School Board
- Review of Recreation Field Ordinance
- Recreation Field Grant - Alice Merrill
- Pedestrian Bridge Project Update and Modification Approval - Pat Travers
- Municipal Building Energy Efficiency Report - Bob Atchison
- Review of Opera House/Town Hall Management Contract Information and Issues
- Approve Minutes
- Other Business
- Adjourn

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Thayer stated that 8/14/18 is primary election day, noting that Vermont does not require voters to declare party status at the polls. Voters can cast their ballots at the Town Clerk's office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays leading up to election day as well as through absentee ballots.
- Thayer reported that she had recently attended a forum on Public Safety Communication and Dispatching where one of the issues was centralizing dispatching in the Central Vermont area. Thayer voiced her opinion at that meeting that whatever is planned, it be done in a thrifty way.
- Thayer noted that the Select Board meeting minutes are available on the Town website on or before the Friday following each regular meeting.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells presented a warrant for Select Board approval, noting that there will be two more needing approval by Thursday of this week.

- Wells reviewed the various ways in which voters can cast their ballots for the upcoming primary election.
- Wells reported that the tax bills went out on 7/12/18 and are due on 8/15/18. Those who have not received a tax bill should call the Town Clerk's office. Wells reviewed the ways taxpayers can pay, noting that to be considered on time, payment needs to be received at the Town Clerk's office by 4pm on 8/15/18 or postmarked no later than 8/15/18.
- Wells noted a problem with the Vermont Tax Department, which announced that there are 14,000 annual filings that remain unreviewed, thus a lot of people's Homestead exemptions are not reflected on their tax bills. The State hopes to have all the filings completed by the end of July, and town treasurers will then revise those bills and send them out as soon as possible.
- Wells presented materials that will be considered later in the meeting.
- **Thayer made a motion to approve the warrant of 7/20/18. The motion was approved.**

ROAD REPORT

- Road Commissioner Bram Towbin reported on the following:
 - The new truck is coming tomorrow and the Town of Plainfield lettering will be applied to it in the next few days.
 - The equipment to trim the sides of the roads will arrive on 8/6/18.
 - The Road Crew has been inventorying culverts with Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and discovered that there are a couple of big culverts that need work. One is on East Hill Road, the replacement cost of which Towbin hopes will be covered by a grant from the State's Better Back Roads program.
 - The Road Crew has done some of the needed work on Barre Hill Road and will also be working with a private landowner on Harvey Hill.
 - Complaints have been received that cars cannot access the Town Forest via the Gonyeau Road entrance. Fill from another project will be used to smooth out a couple of areas.
 - Road Foreman Mike Nolan's phone will be upgraded. The new phone may come at no cost through AT&T's program with municipalities.
 - Bancroft Pond is extremely low due to fewer beavers in the area whose dams usually keep the water at a higher level. Towbin has spoken to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, which responded that the preference is to let nature take its course. Towbin will keep the Select Board informed.
 - Discussion took place on the Town's procurement of sand and the reliability of testing done by the sand vendors themselves.
 - Wells reported that the new fire truck is expected next week and that she will contact the bank to ensure that the loan documents are in order.

APPOINTMENTS: EMERALD ASH BORER TASK FORCE - NICKO RUBIN, BRAM TOWBIN, OTHERS? TWINFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

- Towbin confirmed his interest in joining the Emerald Ash Borer task force. Tammy Farnham inquired if someone on the Road Crew would be interested in being on the task force, to which Towbin responded negatively. Thayer invited Mel McKnight, who was present to hear the discussion on the issue, to consider joining the task force.
- **Thayer made a motion to appoint Nicko Rubin and Bram Towbin to the Emerald Ash Borer task force. The motion was approved.**
- Thayer reported that no one has come forward thus far who is interested in serving on the Twinfield School Board.

- Charles Cogbill was present to inquire about what the task force is and what its charge is. After a brief discussion, **Thayer made a motion to appoint Charles Cogbill as a member of the Emerald Ash Borer task force. The motion was approved.**
- After discussing possible goals of the task force, **Thayer made a motion to define the role of the task force as inventorying ash trees, assisting residents who have identified infestations, and advising the Select Board. The motion was approved.**

REVIEW OF RECREATION FIELD ORDINANCE

- Thayer proposed delaying discussion until later in the meeting.

RECREATION FIELD GRANT - ALICE MERRILL

- Grant Administrator Alice Merrill was present to review the proposed language in the letter of support from the Select Board for a grant application to be submitted to help fund a new shelter at the Recreation Field. Merrill's understanding is that, if successful, the State will match the dollar amount that the Town has dedicated to the project. Discussion followed regarding whether in-kind contributions can be included in the Town's dollar amount; the proposed specifications and amenities for the pole barn structure itself; the proposed, but currently incomplete budget; use of the Recreation Field reserve fund; and the schedule for getting the needed information gathered by the 7/31/18 grant submission deadline. The Select Board agreed to hold a special meeting on 7/30/18 at 7pm to review the final budget and sign the letter of support.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE PROJECT UPDATE AND MODIFICATION APPROVAL - PAT TRAVERS

- Pat Travers was present along with Pedestrian Bridge Project advisory committee members Laura Ziegler and Tim Phillips to provide an update on the project. The original plan was revised from a separate pedestrian bridge to one that attaches to the existing bridge on Main Street. Travers reviewed the three design options for the attached bridge, noting that the advisory committee had elected to go with alternate #3, a concrete framing overhang configuration, and was requesting approval of that choice by the Select Board. Discussion followed regarding concerns from both Farnham and Thayer about the necessity for and costs involved in providing three new design alternatives as presented by the structural engineering firm subcontracted by the Dufresne Group. Travers noted that he will reach out to Andrea Day at the Dufresne Group to inquire why they thought back in February that there might be savings of \$20,000-to-\$30,000 and what was the information upon which they based the cost estimates versus how the final designs came out. Travers responded affirmatively to Thayer's question as to whether installing the crosswalk was part of the project's original design. Travers also noted that the required services of a resident engineer need not be procured until the project goes to construction. After additional discussion, **Farnham made a motion to accept alternate #3, the concrete framing overhang configuration, as the design option. The motion was approved.**

MUNICIPAL BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY REPORT - BOB ATCHISON

- Energy Coordinator Bob Atchison was present to explain the municipal building energy efficiency audit report. Resident Ed Hutchinson was also present to offer his opinion on some of the report's findings. Discussion followed on recommended measures in the report and other possibilities to lower heating costs and increase the comfort of the working space. Atchison will reconnect with

Will Fitzpatrick, the Efficiency Vermont contractor who conducted the audit, to discuss the possibility of addressing some of the other measures discussed tonight. Atchison agreed to attend the 8/27/18 Select Board meeting to report back on his discussion with Fitzpatrick and noted that this work is in keeping with the approved Town Meeting resolution to lower the Town's energy consumption. Thayer encouraged Atchison to work with the Friends of the Town Hall Opera House (Friends) prior to the next meeting to identify options to increase that building's energy efficiency.

REVIEW OF RECREATION FIELD ORDINANCE

- Thayer tabled discussion on the Recreation Field Ordinance to the next meeting.

REVIEW OF OPERA HOUSE/TOWN HALL MANAGEMENT CONTRACT INFORMATION AND ISSUES

- A brief discussion took place regarding exploring various issues that need to be addressed before the Select Board can approve the new management contract.

APPROVE MINUTES

- **Farnham made a motion to approve the minutes of the 7/9/18 Select Board meeting as written. The motion was approved.**

ADJOURN

- **Thayer made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff