

## Virtual Selectboard Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2020

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Pat Harvey, Frank Severy

Guests: Orca Media, Martha Slater, Joan Allen, Bruce Flewelling, Burma Cassidy, Jeff Gephart, Kristen LaPell, Kristen and Marty, Lizzy Shackelford, Ethan Bowen, Kinsley Tener, Harland McKirryher, Brad McKirryher, Emma Wade, Jeannette, Vic Ribauda and Julie Smith

Doon called the meeting at 6:03 pm.

Doon read the State statute guidelines for holding a proper meeting electronically and confirmed the open meeting law conformity.

**Prior Meeting Minutes:** Doon moved to approve the June 22, 2020 Selectboard minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted

**Joan Updates:** Joan noted that she was able to find additional funding through a Disaster Recovery Relief Fund to help Dean Mendell with the Breakneck Brook project and will comment more about that soon.

She also updated the board on the Town Water Storm Project at the town garage. WRP was able to get a grant that would not require any additional funds from the town. The previous grant WRP had for this project did require 20% from the town for any costs incurred. The current grant would provide up to \$90,000 improvements paid in full by the grant. Joan noted after discussion with Cooter, WRP is going to handle the bidding and do the contracting directly. Cooter would like the timing to not interfere with stockpiling sand for winter maintenance. They had decided on an attentive start date of Monday, August 10 with the project expecting to take about a week. WRP will invite local contractors to bid.

Joan noted on the Mount Cushman Project, WRP would come up with a low-cost reasonable solution to Mrs. Bonn's concerns which would allow the project to work on her property. Joan noted approval from the selectboard on the plan would have to be reviewed. She noted the next step would be to meet with another family member that WRP has contact with and have conversation to help move the project along. Joan noted the plans to the selectboard on the Bonn property. Board agreed.

### **New Business:**

**Park House Generator:** Joan drafted a letter of support from the Town that will need to be signed by the selectboard to include in a grant Walt Wells is preparing for a generator for the Park House. The grant is due at the end the month.

**Approval of Class 4 Highway Improvement Application:** Doon noted an application has been submitted from Marty and Kristen for improvements to Pine Gap Rd. Doon noted the history of Pine Gap. Doon noted the application is asking permission to clear trees, improve existing water bars and make pine gap passable so they can access their property. Doon noted he had walked the property with Cooter and Christopher Mattrick from the National Forest and Marty to view his proposal. During the comment period, Pat noted there were a couple other similar situations

with Class 4 improvements maintained by landowners at their expense. Emma noted she was not notified that the application was submitted since it affects her property. She noted she is concerned the town ordinance does not state that landowners adjacent are not notified when an application is submitted. Marty spoke about their intent and modification to the road. Marty noted the footprint will be changed very little. He noted it will go across the edge of the Wade property and the National Forest Service. He noted his intention is to make it passable in a four-wheel drive vehicle. He noted to remove some trees that are down and a handful of trees standing and some work above the Wade property on the Forest Service Land. He noted it is not the intention to make the road look like Bingo Road but to make it passable. Emma noted the concern to the water source being disrupted. Marty reassured that they would do their best on the road and the drainage will be better than it is today. A question was raised about the communication of when work will be done, machinery used and times it will be used. Doon noted this would be less of an impact then the logging that will happen on the other side of the road. Doon noted those who use the Pine Gap Rd., the work done by Marty will be a minimal intrusion. Doon suggested that Marty notify the landowners when he is working. After lengthy discussion ensued, Doon moved to approve the Class 4 Highway Improvement Application with conditions to notify adjacent landowners of when work will be performed. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

**Tax Bills:** Julie noted the School Budget did not pass on June 30 therefore the education tax rate will delay the Tax Bills to be printed. The cost of reprinting, changing the tax rate and software upgrades would cost the town about \$1500. Julie noted after speaking with a VLCT attorney, the selectboard has the ability through ACT 102 2020 to postpone the tax due dates. Discussion ensued and Doon moved to postpone the August 15 due date to Sept. 15. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted

**Joining other Vermont Communities mandating face masks in Rochester:** Vic noted Rochester remains among the towns that do not have any confirmed cases of COVID. Vic noted wearing a mask is well documented from Federal and State professional groups and is one of the fastest ways of slowing down the spread of the virus. Vic noted many do wear masks but there is a sizable amount that do not. He noted we should encourage people to wear masks. He noted to adopt new habits when you can't be more than 6' from others. Wearing a mask inside business', that are enclosed spaces with less air circulation then if you were outside. Vic noted it would be important for the selectboard to go on record to recommend that visitors and residents wear a mask. Doon noted the endorsement is basically everyone's responsibility and awareness and to lead by example. Doon noted it is the visitors that we worry about. Doon thought we should come up with a catchy phrase that Rochester is a Mask town to make an attempt to communicate to visitors that we do wear them. Doon noted that mandating would require that we create an ordinance and was not looking to do that. Vic noted he would work with the Task Force to come up with a communication method to educate and reinforce.

**School Buildings:** Ethan spoke to the board about this being an informational gathering only and the school board has not made formal motion to engage in the transfer. He noted one piece that was discussed was there would be no educational activity in the high school building this year and vigorous efforts to move to new opportunities. Ethan noted the transfer would be the transferring of the high school to the Town of Rochester. Discussion would follow into executive

session later. Pat noted there will be a school board meeting the following night if anyone has further interest to dial in to the meeting. Ethan noted it is going to be an overly complex decision.

Jeff Gephart spoke to see if there are any needs from the board as he is newly elected as the Town Energy Coordinator. He asked to have access to the energy bills the town has for the town office and school building. Julie noted that information for the Town Office is available any time for him to review. Jeff noted a five-town energy committee is forming from surrounding towns.

Doon moved to adjourn at 8:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith