

Virtual Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2021

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Pat Harvey, Frank Severy

Guests: Guests: Martha Slater, Orca Media, Joan Allen, Kristen & Troy LaPell, Nancy Woolley, Greg White, Jeff Gephart, Tony Goupee, Kathryn Schenkman, Vic Ribaud, Rob Gardner, Tim Pratt

Doon called the at 6:02 pm

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

Additions: Kathryn- Update to High School Building, Frank-Town Meeting Schedule

Prior Meeting Minutes: Doon moved to approve December 14, 2020 minutes with one clerical error. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted. Doon moved to approve the December 28, 2020 minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Frank noted the run-down schedule for the Town Meeting. Frank noted that on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 is the last day to receive all signed petitions. He noted that Monday, January 18, 2021 is the last day for consent forms for anyone wishing to run for any of the open elected official positions by 5 pm. The office will be open to receive the forms all day. Frank noted Wednesday, January 20, 2021 is the first day we can post the Warning for the Town Meeting. He noted Friday, January 29, 2021 is the last day for the Warning for the Town Meeting to be posted. Frank noted Friday, February 19, 2021 is the last day to mail out the Town Reports and Friday, February 19, 2021 the warned virtual informational meeting can take place up until the Town meeting. Frank noted the board will decide what days to hold the informational meetings, noting a regularly scheduled selectboard meeting is also scheduled for that week. Nancy noted the informational meetings will need to be warned around the 20th of February. She noted to properly warn the meetings for example a February 22, 2021 Informational Meeting would have to be properly warned on February 16, 2021. She noted if an Informational Meeting were to take place the week of the 15th we would have to properly warn by the 9th of February.

Joan Updates: Joan noted one item to discuss, to provide Chris Bump from VTrans She noted more information including GPS coordinates and details for further discussion. She noted after speaking with VTrans the work they will provide is simply just a layer of asphalt. Joan noted the project is not scheduled until 2022. Discussion continued about the four known problem sites in town and a walk through was scheduled to include Cooter, Frank, and herself.

Library Updates: Tony noted the Library continues with the Porch pick-up. He noted there will be a trustee meeting @ 5:45 pm tomorrow on zoom.

Approval of 2021 First Class License and Outside Consumption Permit for Maple Soul: Doon moved to approve the renewal licenses for Maple Soul. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Approval of FY22 Town Budget: Doon noted this budget does not include voted articles, WRVA (White River Valley Ambulance), Library, Recycling or Appropriations which would

amount to \$167,344.00. This will be voted separately. The total fund expenditures to operate in the amount of \$ 1,095,483.00 of which \$766,670.00 shall be raised by taxes. Greg noted the final increase on the tax rate resulted in 2.28% increase. Doon noted this is only the municipal part of the taxes and does not include the school taxes, which will have a big effect on the taxes. Doon moved to approve the setting of the budget in the amount to be raised by taxes for FY22. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted. Doon thanked everyone involved in the budget process and noted the ease of using zoom to hold the meetings.

Appoint Becky Klein for vacant position on Planning Commission Board: Doon moved to appoint Becky Klein to the vacant Planning Commission position. He noted we are lucky to have her and her knowledge and she will be an asset to the committee. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted. Doon noted Joan Pontious and Eric Bowman both have resigned after many years on the Committee. The board thanked them for their time on the committee.

Kathryn asked what the budget committees final thinking about the possibility of the town acquisition or if they were intending to put any funds towards that potential. She also asked for an update from Pat, who met with Ethan to know where the negotiations are with the selectboard and the schoolboard. She noted the importance of that update with the committee she is working with to be in the loop with the conversations happening. Pat noted the first meeting happened to have discussion about the building. She noted the purpose of today's meeting was to submit the preliminary lot line adjustments for subdivision of the property. She noted no decisions were made. She noted for the school board to continue down the path for a wastewater permit for a secondary system, they need to submit actual lot lines. Pat noted in executive session later tonight the board will discuss the proposed lines. She noted they will need to discuss whether they will bring it to the zoning board. She noted if they can approve the new lot lines on the proposal then they can move forward to the next level to get a secondary septic system. Discussion ensued with the school building acquisition. Kathryn asked what the feeling was of the selectboard about the acquisition. Frank noted he is opposed to buying the building. Frank noted there are three options, to his knowledge out there for the status of the building. He noted to keep it as a school, which will still cost us a lot of money. He noted the other is to put it on the tax roll and tax it by someone commercially and the third is demolition. Frank noted in his opinion the town could not afford it. Doon noted there is a fourth and bigger challenge and more creative approach is for the town to take position of it and make a reuse of it to support it. Doon noted there are a lot of unknowns there. His take is noting to be rushed into. He noted there is a committee to come up with a reasonable proposal of what the building could be used for. Doon noted a question was asked earlier if he budget committee put aside any money towards the building. Doon noted they did not put \$20, 000 in the budget to anticipate buying the building. He noted it is a complicated issue. He noted the whole issue of Stockbridge requesting a vote to de-merge. He noted they do not have the power to force the de-merger if Rochester does not vote to support that option. Doon noted we would need to re-evaluate the situation if the school drops in our lap. Doon noted the pressure to make decisions right away creates a lot of resistance to that. Discussion ensued in a lengthy conversation with several concerns.

Doon moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 pm to move into executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith

Doon noted the board exited executive session at 7:35 Pm. The board reviewed proposed map of separating school buildings. Selectboard recommend meeting with Rochester Planning and Zoning. Board has concerns with road frontage and right-of-way for Town septic system.