

April 26, 2021

## Selectboard Meeting

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Pat Harvey, Frank Severy

Guests: Julie Smith, Nancy Woolley, Zack Cavacas, Jay Flood, Kristen & Troy LaPell, Martha Slater, Tony Goupee, Vic Ribaud, Rob Gardner, Jeff Gephart, Bruce Flewelling, Joan Allen, Kathryn Schenkman, Burma Cassidy, Peter Jensen, Orca Media, Arthur Lynds, Tim Pratt, Robert Franks and Kinley Tener

Doon called the meeting at 6:00 pm

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

**Additions to the Agenda:** Robert Franks-Bethel Mountain Road Signage, TRORC and what role they play, Redistricting/Annexing Plan for Rochester, and the continued Zoom platform for these meetings.

**Prior Meeting Minutes:** Doon moved to approve the April 12, 2021 minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

**Utilities Operator:** Terry is interested in raising the utility rates by ten cents per thousand gallons. He explained the pumps will need to be replaced. Most towns have fees for residential and different fees for commercial. He found the biggest problem now is everyone is installing low flush toilets, so the water consumption is down. He would like to do a comparison with other towns to see where we stand. He said our town has one of the lowest rates in the state, with water at 30 cents per thousand gallons and the sewer rate at 65 cents per thousand gallons. Doon asked if it would affect the sewer rate as well and Terry noted it would. Terry said there were not enough funds in the utility fund to replace the pumps. He stated the sewer pumps have been installed since 1984 and a new pump would cost \$20,000.00 not including installation. He noted the Town has one new pump set aside but will need an additional one when it comes time to install. Terry estimated the water pumps at \$10,000.00-12,000.00 to purchase and last about 10-11 years. He is concerned about the lack of funds to replace all the pumps. Doon noted Terry will gather more information and bring to the next selectboard meeting.

**Energy Coordinator:** Jeff is working on getting the GMP site visit rescheduled so Frank can attend. He is meeting with Planning and Zoning and has invited Dan McKinley to the GMP Site tour. He thought by the end of the week we should know how the town did with the Vermont Council of Rural Development Climate Economies Model Communities program. He is working on the Mow Electric campaign demo day scheduled the last week of May or first week of June.

**Adopt LEMP:** Vic noted each town is required to have the LEMP plan adopted by the selectboard before May 1 and returned to TRORC. He asked to make some changes and updates of contact information before submitting. He would like after the first of the year when Lindy Stetson becomes Principal for both school campuses, to change to her name as the contact for the emergency shelter, which is the elementary school. Frank asked to also change the name of the Bethel Manager. Doon moved to adopt the plan with Frank's correction. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

**Able Waste Proposal:** Arthur Lynds spoke to the board about proposing to the town permission of a Tri-Town agreement with Rochester as a host town. He would like to use the parking lot at the Town office in Rochester 52 weeks a year from 8am-11am and allow Hancock and Granville and Rochester with Fast Trash and Recycling. He stated the rates would not increase in either town. The benefit for Rochester would be 3-hour program, 52 weeks a year for the same amount as 3-hour program, 24 weeks a year.

Arthur explained Hancock and Granville would also benefit of a 3-hour program vs. their current 2-hour program and gain the 52 weeks. Arthur will attend their selectboard meetings but would need the permission of Rochester to continue. The board was in support of his proposal. Arthur will keep the board informed and if all approved, he will write a second addendum to the contract.

**Driveway Permit for Agi Klausz Baier:** Doon noted he spoke with Agi and would like to find out about the property lines before approving. Agi will need to find the abutter's surveys to search a property line since her property had not been surveyed. Doon tabled the approval for more research to be done.

**Park Use Application for Green Up Day:** Doon moved to approve the application if they follow the state guidelines. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

**Vermont Black Gold Compost:** Zac introduced himself and his business partner Jay Flood. They are in the process of opening a compost facility on Jerusalem Hill and asking for a letter of support from the Town to include in their paperwork for a State permit. Doon asked how big of an operation are they planning. Jay explained it is considered a small facility based on 200 cubic yards of food scraps. He explained the threshold for a small facility is 2,000 cubic yards. Four days a week Zac will collect his food scraps and they will be dropped off at the facility. The facility is basically a gravel pad with concrete blocks around it. The material will be mixed with dry matter to contain the moisture and this process will happen twice a week by the landowner, Stuart Brown. Pat asked if the business is a for profit business and Jay confirmed that it was. Zack noted all surrounding neighbors have been communicated to and support their venture. Frank asked how the state looks at the business, if its commercial or agriculture. Jay noted the State considers it commercial. Jay explained that a farm that processes/composts farm wastes does not require the farm to have a permit. Anyone processing food scrap would require training, which Jay completed and would ask them to register for a permit. Frank asked if they planned to have retail. Zack thought they would like to eventually, but they are not setting up shop at Stuarts. He noted that they will do bulk delivery with bagging to come later. Zack stated they didn't want people to bring their food scraps to the facility. He would have to renew a permit with the state to transfer compost yearly. He stated he has 64 districts that each require permits for his company to transport food scraps. Nancy asked if there was something written somewhere to read up on all of this. Jay shared information can be found on the ANR website. Doon noted that really Zoning should be a part of the process and Frank thought they may need to apply for a conditional use permit through the Planning and Zoning Board to cover their bases. Doon thought it would be best to get the letter of support from that committee as it tends more on the agricultural side so it's a good likelihood of approval. They are meeting in a week or so and to approach their board. Joan asked if they had a site plan prepared to get the permit. She noted there are a lot of streams out there and the concerns for flowing into the wetlands. Jay agreed that was part of the process and they do have a site plan for the runoff. Pat thought the property owner may need to apply for all these permits as well. Discussion ensued with a final thought to attend a Planning and Zoning meeting.

**Construction on West Hill:** Diane Carleton spoke to the board about recently purchasing property on West Hill and noted the bridge would have been replaced by late summer 2021 initially, but the project is stalled. She would like information on how to follow up on the project to find out when the bridge would be constructed. Doon told her it's really the Forest Service that is driving the bridge project. Joan stated primarily for funding at the Federal level and due to the pandemic, the Forest Service put the project on hold this year. She explained the plan preparation was supposed to be done two or three months ago. the town does not have funding for the replacement of the bridge and the Forest Service is the primary source of funding. She said they expect them to come through with the funding sometime next year, which would mean spring/summer of 2022. Diane asked if there will be updates at the selectboard meetings. Doon said the board would have updates and more then likely they would not postpone because the forest service needed the replacement for timber harvesting that will be happening on West Hill. Frank asked if

they could provide their email address to the Town office so we could keep them informed along the way. John Alexander asked if they would install a temporary bridge and if so, what would the weight capacity be for that bridge. Joan thought a temporary bridge would be installed but not sure of the specs on that.

**Joan Updates:** Joan is working with Cooter on the bid notice and documents for the last of the FEMA funded road projects from the April 15, 2019 storm which will need to be completed by the end of this calendar year. She stated the bid notice was in the Herald last week and then posted on the State bidding site as well. She said the bids will be opened at the next selectboard meeting Monday, May 10 with a decision within a couple days after that. She stated the projects consist of 5 different roads and some of them with more than one ditching site. She noted some are on the small side and some are large. She has been working with Frank on the other FEMA project, which is the retaining wall for the stormwater outlet on the Town property. They are getting permission from abutting landowners and Frank was granted permission. Cricket is doing the drawings for that project and about the middle of next month the bid should be out for that. She noted the FEMA review process with work that was done way back at the end of 2019. She said they delayed a set of questions whether we have received or applied for permits. She said she was working with Chris Bump to assist in that process at the state and federal level to see if there are any permits that were missed. The town will have to sign off from the States Stream Engineer and the US Army Corps of Engineers. She found no permits were required and the last one will be on Tuesday; April 28 and Cooter will be going out to all the other sites with a woman who works for the wetlands from the State and hopefully she will come to the same conclusion so it will wrap up that part of the FEMA work.

**Library Updates:** Tony stated the next Trustees meeting will be May 11 at 6 pm.

**Old News:** Fourth of July- Doon thought maybe to hold off another year due to the state guidelines currently. Martha shared from the Governor's Office there wouldn't be restrictions for gatherings after the Fourth of July. She said the Governor asked people to take precautions. She thought certain activities such as the concerts on the Park, people can separate from each other. She stated the parade draws a big crowd that may not be able to social distance. Vic spoke and said we need to remember the pandemic is still here. The concern is the children under the age of 13, who will not be able to be vaccinated until next winter. Vic said they are protected in the school setting because of protocol but a parade setting is not the same. Vic explained the concern with that setting is uneasy. He would second Doon on the decision. Doon noted we will wait another year.

**Additions to the agenda:** Doon noted he received an email with some questions to be added to the agenda. First question is about the signage to Bethel Mountain Road. Frank stated he has been in touch with several people on the state level to get permission for signage on Rout 100 and 73 indicating alternative routes instead of GPS on the Bethel Mountain Rd. He is working with Bethel Manager, Therese who is on vacation this week. He did talk with Chris Bump last week and Chris thought that Frank was making a good approach. He stated it won't stop the traffic, but the signage will help. He thought perhaps a sign indicating where 89 is from here, might be useful and getting off 89 going west and north would help. He also thought another on Route 12 before you get on Camp Brook Road. Frank said he will stay on top of it and make weekly phone calls as well.

Doon noted there was a question on TRORC. Robert Franks asked where the money comes from to TRORC when the town tax base cant afford improvements whether it is Rochester or Bethel? Doon stated TRORC is a helpful ally in applying for grants to access money from State and Government and Private funds. He noted TRORC would receive pay through the grants they apply for just like a grant writer would. He noted they receive a cut from each fund granted for their services.

Doon noted another question about the redistricting of Rochester. Doon noted he had not heard about it. Robert noted to go on the Senators maps and notice Rochester is nowhere. He noted the county of Windsor is so big that the politicians can't handle it, saying its way too big. Doon asked what we would need to do about that. Roberts noted the 2020 census will demand how Rochester is placed within voting districts and counties. Doon noted we don't have control of that. Doon noted it will be interesting how that plays out. He noted it's the first he noted the re-districting of the counties. Pat noted this has been going on for some time. She noted those who are concerned should contact the local senators.

Doon noted the last question was about why the selectboard is still meeting via Zoom, while businesses are open. Doon noted we are following the state guidelines from the state government. He noted because of the guidelines the decision to not have the Fourth of July Parade this year. Discussion ensued with support from many who are happy to attend the meetings electronically.

Robert asked about accessing the Board of Civil Authority meeting minutes. Julie noted they are in the office if he wishes to come in and read them.

Doon moved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith