

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2021

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Frank Severy, Pat Harvey

Guests Present: John Champion, Terry Severy, Orca Media, Pat Gendron, Jeff Gephart, Harland Mckirryher

Guests Present on Zoom: Orca Media, Martha Slater, Dave Harvey and Joan Allen

Doon called the meeting at 6:15 pm.

Doon confirmed the open meeting law conformity.

Doon moved to approve the June 28 selectboard minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted. Doon moved to approve the July 2 Special Selectboard Meeting. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Joan Updates: Joan provided the board with a spread sheet from G&N for the Nason Brook culvert replacement. The contractor wanted to compare the costs of building materials and other things to complete the job to her cost sheet submitted in 2020 making sure the cost to the project stay in check. Joan noted with the extenuation circumstances due to COVID, the cost may have changed. Joan explained that Michelle (G&N) would keep increases down to 1%. Doon added the big part of keeping the costs down was the decision to close the road instead of the bypass. Joan asked the board for their approval so she could create a new addendum to the contract. Pat clarified the cost without the bypass road in there, it was a 7% increase, which is reduced by the amount of the bypass road to a 1% increase. Joan agreed. Doon made a motion to approve. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Pat asked if the project would go beyond the 3-week closure there would be a penalty. The board thought something should be included in the contract about the cost to G&N and not the town. Discussion about the Bethel Mountain closure and contacting the fire and rescue. Joan shared Michelle has prepared the message boards and signs set up with an approved traffic plan. The information was shared with the Town of Bethel. Joan shared the culvert is supposed to be delivered the last week of July and based on that information the project would begin on August 2. Message boards would be set up well in advanced on the week of July 19th. Joan would also post in Front Porch Forum and all social media sites. Terry said he would contact Fire and Rescue in Bethel. Joan asked the board to review her submission for the various sites. Frank agreed.

Joan shared that she was strongly advised to ask for an extension for the Retaining Wall Project so she could find additional funding. The first extension was considered a free pass approved through December of this year. For a second pass on this funding, it would require an approval from authorities further up the FEMA chain. It was suggested to Joan to write a letter and asked for Doon's signature for the extension and reasoning. This would allow a December 2022 deadline on the second pass and allow the town to retain the \$15,800.00 received from FEMA. If the town successfully receives a USDA grant, Joan is currently working on, they will award up to 35% of the project which will be another \$15,750.00. Joan stated that with both funding

sources the Town would need to come up with the remaining \$14,000.00. Joan was not sure if the ARPA money could be used for the remainder. Board agreed to ask for the extension on the FEMA money while investigation additional funds.

Library Updates: Tony announced there will be a trustees' meeting tomorrow at 6 pm in the Vermont room in the library. Tony shared the community cookbook is nearly ready to be published. The cookbooks will be sold at Sandy's Bakery, the Café and at the library. Tony shared that 12 people were vaccinated at the clinic the library held on Friday, July 9th.

Highway Updates: Cooter said they are finishing a project on Sky Hollow Road. Doon said Cooter shared with the board the breakdown of different vehicles over the last 2 years. Doon said in two years, the one truck had 12 weeks out of service and the other truck had 14 weeks out of service and the pickup was out for 2 weeks. Doon said this is in reference to purchasing a new truck and not trading in the old truck and keep it as a backup which would reducing stress with potential break downs. Pat said she is not in favor of having an extra truck. She said there is no place to store it. She said vehicles that just sit will have more issues. Doon asked if Cooter was planning to park it. Cooter said the trucks would get rotated. Pat asked where the truck would get parked, and Cooter said he could park the grader outdoors. Cooter shared when they buy the new truck, they will be down to only one truck until the new truck is finished. Discussion ensued. Board would like to order the truck and decide what to do with the second truck after. Pat asked if Cooter received three quotes per the procurement policy. Cooter said he was only able to get 2 quotes and the third company was not able to quote. Doon moved to order the Western Star truck to have in time for plow season and allow time to speak to B&F and decide with second truck later. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted. Harland commended the highway for doing a great job last winter with the roads and grading.

Utilities Update: Terry said one of the pumps had issues on the 4th of July. He said it was fixed for now. He said the pump was not running and short cycling. Terry waited until after the fourth for the repair. While the company was out to do the repair, he asked about the counters in the dosing tanks up in the leach field. He said the counters are 17 years old. The company gave Terry a quote for the counters with emissions and solar panel allowing the information to download to your phone. Terry said 3 counters are not working currently. The quote Terry received was \$4,200.00. Terry thought with some prep work from the town, the counters and installation would be about \$5,000.00.

Terry spoke on behalf of the Fire Department for funding on the air compressor. He said they are looking into applying for a grant and writing letters for fund raising. The air compressor costs about \$65,000 for a fill station and air compressor. He said someone could get really hurt right now the way they fill their tanks currently. He said it was not an ideal situation and the fill station would be a much safer solution.

Energy Updates: Jeff noted the Energy and Efficiencies group will be coming in tomorrow to do the audit on all the town owned buildings at 9 am. Pat and Frank were both interested in attending the walk-around. Jeff said he had provided all utility bills for each building and currently working on the CV Oil bills. Doon said the school building should be looked at as part of the audit since the school building is in limbo right now. Jeff said the school has provided their energy bills for energy use.

Approving the new FY 21-22 Tax rate: Doon announced the municipal's final rate of .5796 for the tax bills. The education tax rate for homestead is 1.5886 and for non-homestead, the rate is 1.5654. Doon moved to approve the municipal tax rate of .5796. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Town Bee Pollinator Project: Doon read a letter from Grace Futral and her organization, Bee the Change. They would like to support communities in creating a pollinator habitat as part of a collective town effort. They are asking communities to designate an acre of municipal space, school space or other area—currently mowed or unused – that you would envision as a dynamic pollinator meadow. Bee the Change would provide the seeds, expertise, and potential manpower to foster a successful transformation. Doon noted the letter shared 25 towns are currently sharing a habitat out of the 226 Vermont towns. The board discussed several locations in town that they thought could provide this movement. Pat shared the sewer site, up by Crowley's or in Bingo. Terry did not think we had an acre at the sewer site. Frank asked about down by the well house. Terry thought they could not do anything down by the pumphouse. Doon asked to find out what would be planted exactly. Terry was concerned about the wellhead protection plan. Doon said we have interest in the project but will need a likely spot. Doon said we will do some research and discuss further at the next meeting.

Driveway Permit Approval-Patrick Gendron: Doon noted a new driveway permit submitted for 922 Bethel Mountain Road. Doon said the location is just uphill from Steve Sak's driveway. Doon said he understood there was discussion about Steve abandoning his driveway, which is not an ideal location and joining in on the proposed driveway. Doon thought that would be an improvement since it would not be adding a driveway with the condition of allowing Steve to use this new driveway. Doon asked Cooter for his input and Cooter asked if the driveways are combined to remove the culvert at Steve's current driveway location. Pat said this is all tentative and would need to get this all-in writing and approved with Steve. Terry said years ago when they build Steve's house, there could only be one driveway cut for both properties like the properties across from where he lives. They could only have one driveway cut for 2 lots. Pat asked if this permit was brought up in the past and what had happened then. Pat said it had been paid for but not signed and did not know the outcome from that permit process. The board's decision was to have only one access point for both lots, preferably the new permit if Steve is willing to abandon his and use Gendron's new driveway with legal documentation. The board will table the permit as pending until they hear back from Pat with approval from Steve.

Driveway Permit Approval-Dave Kennett: Doon asked Cooter about this driveway. Cooter thought he would discuss with Dave some options he thought about on saving him from moving a lot of earth. The board decided to table the permit until Cooter had a chance to discuss with Dave his thoughts.

Doon moved to adjourn at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith

