

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

November 22, 2021

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Frank Severy, Pat Harvey

Guests Present: Kristen LaPell, Angus McCusker, Orca Media

Guests Present on Zoom: Orca, Martha Slater, Nancy Vadnais, Joan Allen, Troy LaPell, Jeff Gephart, Nancy Woolley

Doon called the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Doon confirmed the open meeting law conformity.

Doon made a public statement saying goodbye to Tom Pierce and thanked him for his many contributions to our town.

Doon limited the comments to five minutes for each comment.

Prior Meeting Minutes: Doon moved to approve. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Approval for location of Town Meeting: Doon stated we have two locations to hold the town meeting. He felt if it was heated to continue to have it held in the auditorium. Frank disagreed and wanted to see it held in Pierce Hall. Pat's opinion was to continue to have it in the auditorium because of the practicality and given we are still dealing with COVID. Board decided to have it at the auditorium.

ERSA Grant Application-Letter of support from town: Angus spoke to the board about the Enhancements of Recreation and Stewardship Asset application grant provided by the state to enhance the existing trail systems. He shared the Ridgeline Outdoor Collective, formerly RASTA is applying for these funds. They will need a letter of support from the town to include with the application to submit the end of the week. Doon recused himself and Pat made a motion to approve providing a letter of support from the Town of Rochester. Frank seconded. Both were in favor. So, voted.

Town of Randolph asking for letter of support for VOREC application: Angus spoke to the board about Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative community grant application with the Town of Randolph in partnership with Vermont Huts Association to develop a new trail in the vicinity of Braintree, Randolph, and East Rochester as part of the Velomont Trail and to include a hostile in Randolph Village. This would connect the community. The trail system is now to the top of Randolph Gap. This would allow the trail system to move east towards Braintree with landowners' permission. Angus was asking for a letter of support from the Town of Rochester. He noted the Town of Braintree has submitted their letter of support for the grant application. Doon recused himself. Pat made a motion to approve providing a letter of support for the VOREC application. Frank seconded. Both were in favor. So, voted

Discussion about textmygov.com for town: Frank said this was a pitch put together by the group and was interesting. The way the program works is getting information out through

texting. The town would set up the different departments and as texts are used each keyword would trigger a text to the appropriate department. The

Discussion about installing a convex mirror across from Woodlawn Cemetery for northbound traffic: Nancy spoke about the concern for the entrance and exit of cemetery, especially turning left with poor visibility. She proposed a convex mirror placed to help motorists who are turning left from the cemetery. Discussion about location of the right of way for the placement of the mirror should be discussed with the private landowner seeking permission since it is outside the right of way. Doon felt the issue should be pursued privately. The town will need to look up the right of way on maps to make sure this can be done properly

Approval of ending lease with Symquest and going with Magee for office printer/scanner: The current lease ends in March of 2022. After long discussions with Magee and their product for the new office printer/scanner the new machine would be less than the current lease and customer service was a big bonus.

Joan Updates: Frank asked about the status of West Hill Bridge easements. She was waiting for the Carter family to respond to her offer.

Library Updates: Tony was not present, but Doon announced that the library is closed currently and providing the porch pick-up at this time.

Energy Updates: Jeff is currently working on the Rochester Area Climate Initiative trying to get a good turnout in the subject area groups that were prioritized from the last meeting. The next meeting is December 6th. He is currently working on cataloging the agricultural businesses in the area together. He informed the board that he spoke with Green Mountain Power waiting to hear what the summary was from the bids for the resiliency zone. He mentioned that 2 of the 8 bidders is utilizing space away from town in the gravel pit owned by North Hollow Farms on Route 73. Jeff shared that GMP is pretty excited about that with the 3.5-acre generation field they can provide the one mega-watt for the community.

Jeff noted on Friday, December 3 at 10:30 at the library, they are meeting with Vermont Preservation Trust to look at the exterior cladding and what to do with that.

Jeff asked the board if he could be part of the group that is working on the town buildings audit from EEI. He would like to bring in some professionals to help with providing the ideas for the outcome of that audit. The board agreed. Jeff mentioned how he was able to get 7 new recruits from Pierce Hall meeting to help with the Valley Energy and Action Committee.

Jeff apologized for the outcome of the mowing and asked if there was any way to negotiate to see if the mowing can be done with a commercial battery-electric mower. Doon felt it was worth a conversation with whom ever they decide on. Doon felt the board was not ready to make it mandatory just yet. He felt it would limit the number of bids. Frank announced that only one bid came in. Jeff shared that with the event he held earlier in the year there were 3 companies there with their mowers and stated the technology has arrived. He felt it was a bit expensive for the upfront costs but after that the maintenance is minimal. Jeff said with one bid provided, it would make it easier for him to have a discussion with the bidder. Doon asked if there were any talk of electric snow removal tools. He felt that would be of importance at this time. Jeff explained at

this time the technology is not quite there yet. Martha asked if the bid opening was going to happen. Doon noted we overlooked putting the opening of the bid on the agenda so no decision can be made for the awarding of the bid. Doon announced we can add that warning to the Budget and Finance meeting on Wednesday, November 24 at 3pm. Jeff was hopeful that with a three-year contract there was room for negotiating battery-electric mower in the contract. Doon stated that conversation could aspire when they get on to that. Pat noted that with every decision they need to discuss climate change and they would discuss that with the contractor.

Doon announced we did receive one bid for the town mowing and sidewalk snow removal. He said the bid was from 4 Season Property Management and Excavation from Stockbridge, VT. His bid for the town mowing is for \$10,200.00 paid monthly from May to October for a 3-year contract. His other bid for the sidewalk snow removal came in at \$18,000.00 paid monthly from November to April for a 3-year contract. Doon noted without it warned on the agenda, no decision can be made at the meeting.

Public Comment: no public comments

Doon moved to adjourn the meeting to go into executive session to discuss employee vacation time.

Meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Executive session began at 6:54pm.

Board made decision to match vacation pay to calendar year from hire date.

Executive session ended at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith