

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2022

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Frank Severy, Pat Harvey

Guests Present: Kristen LaPell, Orca Media, Terry Severy, David Curtis, Kelly Kelly, Tony Goupee

Guests Present on Zoom: Orca Media, Martha Slater, Troy LaPell, Robert Franks(phone), Robert Franks, Troy LaPell, Barbara Shenton, Vic Ribaud, Nancy Woolley, Barb DeHart, Joan, Doreen Jones, Jeannette Bair, Bruce Flewelling, Jeff Gephart

Doon confirmed the open meeting law conformity.

Public Comment: Doon limited the comments to five minutes for each comment.

Prior Meeting Minutes: Doon moved to approve the December 27 selectboard meeting minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Library Trustees to discuss concerns: Kelly Kelly spoke on behalf of the library as Trustee Chair and addressed the concern of the Building Reserve Fund. She and the other trustees wanted to know how the fund worked and what they could do to address the needs of repairs needed for the library. Doon noted the building fund currently does not have much for funds to go around and is aware of the needs of the library and the outside structure. He said they are addressing the biggest issues in need. Frank shared that the building is under the charge of the trustee based on a special town meeting in June of 2006 putting the building as a municipal library but the building itself is under the charge of the trustees. He said in the past they have always gone to the voters for money. Frank shared that any renovations done to the library has gone to the voters. Frank said back in 2013 there was a bond for the work on the inside and the payment is about \$13,000.00 a year. He suggested to the trustees to seek grants and any matches needed to come to the town. He suggested to find a grant writer to get a grant to fix the outside of the building. Kelly asked in the past there used to be a library reserve fund and then it was scooped up by the town. Doon said that was not the case. Doon said there is no question there is a need for funding for the town buildings. He said the building fund only has funds for patching at this time. He said the town clerk building had to have chimney repair work because of the liability. Kelly asked why the petition was shown as a social service appropriation. Kelly asked if the petition is because of the request of more funds and if they had level funded there would not have been a need for the petition. Kelly asked if the town crew could plow the parking spaces in front of the library. Jeannette said the state comes through and leaves the snow in their parking space which is too much for the winter maintenance guy to shovel. Doon said he would remind the crew about the parking there.

Highway Mileage Report: Doon said this is a yearly report to the state for the mileage count on all types of road classes. He said there is zero miles for the class 1 road, because they are states responsibilities. He said for the class 2 roads there are 12.24 miles. Class 3 roads have 38.67 miles and state highways is 17.135 miles. He said there are 6.85 miles of legal trails and 7.96 miles of class 4 roads. Doon moved to approve. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Legal Trail discussion between Jerusalem and South Hollow: Doon said there is a party interested in purchasing this property and there is a legal trail in concern. They ask if they can improve the legal trail to use as access for possible homesite as a driveway. Doon shared after reading he felt this was acceptable. Frank said this may affect the landowners. He said he understands the purchaser but knows there are other access points to this property that he could utilize. Frank shared the class 4 hits his property on Jerusalem. Larry shared that DeSantis owned the property between him and the property in question. Larry asked is that the right use for a legal trail. He said he refers to the Town Plan that trails are used for recreational purposes and not intended for vehicle access therefore they are not maintained. He said this is not because he is opposed. He said there are things to think about. He said the property is not landlocked, there is road frontage from Route 100. Doon thought if he improves it for a driveway, it would still be a legal trail. Larry said the current request is to follow along the legal trail and branch off to a true driveway. Larry said the problem is what is the purpose of a legal trail designation. He said in statute it says legal trails are not highways. He said the second part to his question is what about subdivision of his property. He said this really puts the question to whether he can call the legal trail frontage on a road for more than one lot. Discussion ensued. Board would need to do further research on this issue.

Town Meeting discussions: Doon announced there have been some directives from the state giving towns some flexibility on how to conduct this year's town meeting because of ongoing covid. Doon stated last year we went to Australian Ballot. Nancy shared there were two informational meetings prior to having an Australian Ballot. Doon read the legislature has approved S.175 which does three things. One, it empowers municipalities to change the date of town meeting and secondly, it empowers municipalities to vote by Australian Ballot rather than from the floor and thirdly, it allows the Secretary of State's office to waive certain statutory deadlines or provisions for town voting by Australian ballot rather than voting from the floor by a case-by-case basis. This will need to be signed by the governor while a second elections related bill is in the works that would allow two things. It would eliminate the need for nominating petitions for town meeting and it would also eliminate the need to comingle ballots. Decision will be made later once legislation makes their decision. The board will hold a special meeting to make the decision in the upcoming week.

Pat announced she will meet with Larry Straus to discuss the new guidance of spending the ARPA grant funds. She said with the information they have received they will decide what input they could make for using in the upcoming year. Larry added all of the careful thought they have put into decisions and attending various meetings through the summer and fall is essentially "thrown out the window". Larry added the US Treasury department adopted the final rule giving a big win for cities and towns by broadening and simplified all spending rules. Larry said it will be much easier and they will share all the details at a later date.

Joan Updates: She has been providing information as needed to the budget and finance committee. She is still working on the FEMA reimbursements and currently working on the bid package for the emergency generator.

Energy Coordinator: Jeff said there is an energy committee meeting coming up on Thursday and Jon Copans from Vermont Council on Rural Development reviewing the Rochester area

climate initiative ranked priorities. He shared Norwich Technologies proposal for the Green Mountain Resiliency bid was selected by GMP and solar generated sited at North Hollow Farm. He believes that is in the gravel pit. He said GMP will be meeting and updating at a later time with the details. Jeff also shared to those involved with GMP coming down to Rochester to look at a facilities in town that would work for electric car charging and the follow up with them is they are looking for our town with a parcel that would work and be ready to move.

Public Comments: Vic announced from TRORC there is a new state level requirement of all towns Emergency Management. Vic read that emergency management division will establish regional emergency management committees which now coordinate emergency planning and preparedness activities to improve the regions abilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from all disasters. He shared this will require each town to designate two people from their regional committee. He stated one of which is the existing emergency meeting director, himself and then a second person would need to be selected by the selectboard, which should be a representative from the local emergency services community, Vic spoke with Terry to choose someone from the fire department to recommend to the selectboard. This would need to be done before the end of January. Terry spoke with Ray and Kevin and decided that he would recommend himself. Doon nominated Terry Severy to be the second person representing the Town of Rochester to the regional management committee. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, voted.

Larry shared how much fun it can be at a selectboard meeting and how badly he misses it with a chuckle.

Doon moved to adjourn. Pat seconded. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith