

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Frank Severy, Pat Harvey

Guests Present: Kristen LaPell, Julie Smith, Terry Severy, Nancy Woolley, Orca Media, Jan McCann, and Lesley Straus

Guests Present on Zoom: Orca, Martha Slater, Troy LaPell, and Sydney Steinle

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

Doon confirmed the open meeting law conformity.

Doon moved to approve the January 22, 2024, selectboard meeting minutes. Doon made a correction to a comment he made. Doon moved to approve with the correction. Pat seconded. All in favor. So approved. Doon also moved to approve the January 26, 2024, emergency meeting minutes. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Shelter Team & Recycling: Jan asked the board what the status was with the emergency generator at the school. She said she had been down recently, and it was making a loud noise. Frank said he was in touch with the contractor. They were playing phone tag. He said the noise appears to be an alarm. Frank said he would try to connect with him to see the status. The alarm keeps going off. Lesley said if we get a repair bill the school should help to pay for the costs if there are any repairs made. Jan also asked about recycling and a situation she had encountered at Recycling on Saturday with a TV that was put in the garbage truck. Julie explained that North Star received a call from the Agency of Natural Resources and Bonnie explained the situation. She takes her trash over to Hubbard's and they single sort her trash. The Agency of Natural Resources sent a letter explaining that North Star was not in violation and would send along literature for them to hand out on Saturdays explaining the process and what items can be recycled. Nancy shared how the town report would have a page in the past from Bethel/Royalton Transfer Station. She said under new owners they may have a page to post as well. Jan asked if the Town Office had an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). She said there are grants available to get them. Doon asked if Jan wanted to fill out the grant to get one for the office. Jan will work with Lesley to get it done.

MTAP discussion: Sydney Steinle from Two Rivers spoke with the board with possible Grants that work with the program. She went through a list of categories looking for eligible projects the town would be interested in to identify what grant funding opportunities are available. MTAP would allow Two Rivers to help with the grant if awarded. The MTAP (Municipal Town Assistance Program) support is available as a first come first serve, as funds are available. The state allocated 3 million to fund this program. One of the goals of the fund is to help use up town and state ARPA funds. Some of the highlights were the update of the Capital Plan, Skatespace, Sidewalks, Housing, Community Solar, Recreation, Bank and Stream Restoration to add to the list of projects.

Park Use Application-Goats for VOTES March 5, 2024, 11am-6pm Rochester Democratic Party: Doon said they plan to bring baby goats to encourage people to come vote in the Presidential Primary on voting day. Doon moved to approve the application. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

CAI-Tax Mapping Company 2024 Contract-April 1, 2024- March 31, 2025: Doon moved to approve the contract with CAI Tax Mapping Company. Pat seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Highway Updates: Frank said the Ford 550 truck is repaired and back in use. He said they took the Dump Truck up to Clarks for radiator work. He said the Bethel Mountain Road is opened and they are all done with the snow maintenance on the Bethel side.

Utilities Operator: Terry said the Fire House met with Ian from the Park House to go over an evacuation plan. They used to go to the Bean House and that isn't really feasible. They would like to have them evacuated to the Town Office Conference Room. Terry asked the board for their permission to use the conference room so they could have a few drills. Pat said they would need to have a key to access the building. It was discussed that Park House would be best to have a key. Doon said it was a good idea with the emergency generator here, heat and elevator for access.

Grant Updates: Kristen updated the board that the remaining \$260,000 from the FLAP grant on West Hill Bridge was allocated and she submitted invoice #2 for the remainder amount and on February 7th they deposited \$260,000 into the towns general checking, which has since been paid to Mascoma towards the loan for the bridge. Kristen signed off on the Jones Mountain FEMA. She said the total amount was \$6,755.00. She said we can expect to get \$5066.00 since FEMA pays 75% of the total. She also signed off on town-wide debris. There were multiple locations that were all grouped into one project. The total was \$4,933. The town is expecting to get \$3,699. She said this is Category A for FEMA and they are considering covering 100%. She submitted the FY25 Class 2 Roadway Grant for the Bethel Mountain project with Rita from Two Rivers.

Public Comment: Julie asked Doon if he could share some information for the West Hill Bond, since the ballots are available, and people didn't understand. Pat spoke and explained the US Forest Service approached the town for a bridge replacement for a logging operation to access West Hill. The town agreed. They were able to give the town \$600,000 towards the bridge. This was in 2019. Covid happened and postponed things. The project was finally a go in 2022 with hope to complete summer of 2023. She explained that after the bids came in the project was 35% higher than anticipated. The board felt with the funds for the grants available they couldn't turn the project away, so they proceeded. The obligation for the town is \$359,000 that wasn't covered by the grants. She explained we are borrowing money for our portion of the costs of the bridge. Doon said the total project costs was \$1,122,939.00. There was \$775,000 in grants that would be lost if we didn't do the project. The homeowners on West Hill have projects that have been put off until a new bridge could be put in. There is also a landowner who would like to build a new home as well. Julie said there were many delays during the whole process. The week after the

US Forest Service approached the board with the opportunity, the April 15th storm hit that took out Bethel Mountain Road as well as many other roads.

Doon moved to adjourn at 7:26 and moved into executive session. Pat seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Smith