

Brookline Selectboard Minutes
February 16, 2011

1. Chairman Doug Wellman called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Present were board members Mike Winot, Kim Rink and Mike Fontaine. Jim Esden, Forestry Specialist and Area Fire Warden Supervisor from the Vermont Department of Forest Parks and Recreation was in attendance at the Boards request. Also present were members of the public Cynthia Nau, Lester D. (Sonny) Rink, Gary and Julie Lavorgna, Helen Samuals, Jim Henderson, Kim Sanky, Raddy Bloom, John Szappanos, and Road Foremen Mark Bills.

2. The minutes of the January 19th meeting were reviewed. Mike Winot motioned they be approved as written. Seconded, all voted in favor.

3. Members of the Public:

a. Gary Lavorgna had a question about signage at by the bridge at the intersection of Putney Mountain and Grassy Brook roads. In particular the “yield to bridge traffic” sign that was removed at the States recommendation. After a brief discussion it was determined that all signage in this area will be reviewed and updated during the bridge project that will take place this year.

b. Jim Henderson voiced his concerns over the vandalism at the bus stop/mailbox shelter at the Whitney Hill/Brassy Brook road intersection. In addition to the vandalism, Jim noted that the shelter is also a place for kids to congregate in the evenings--especially on weekend nights. He suggested that we consider tearing down the building. Doug has reported the vandalism to the Vermont State Police and is awaiting their action.

4. Old Business:

a. Doug introduced Mr. Esden from the Vermont Department of Forest Parks and Recreation and explained the reason for his attendance. Mr. Esden was invited to help answer accusations from Kerry Bourne (and threatened lawsuit) about his perceived harassment by the Fire Warden (Sonny Rink). He further explained his invitation for Mr. Bourne to also attend, but Mr. Bourne declined. Mr. Esden explained the dual duties both State and Town of the Warden. He congratulated Sonny on his 45 years of service as the Brookline Fire Warden. He stated that to the best of his knowledge there at never been a complaint against Sonny. He stated that the duties of the warden are primarily to educate and not enforce and that he is the front line of defense against fires through the issuance of permits. He explained state law regarding burning both of brush and other materials, and in particular the state definition of snow cover. Mr. Esden offered several potential courses of action to deal with this situation ranging from his offer to contact Mr. Bourne, to appointing an assistant so Mr. Bourne does not have to contact Sonny, to calling the fire department and having the warden write a ticket, or as a last resort suing Mr. Bourne as a habitual offender. Doug asked about area towns that require permits regardless of snow cover. The State does not recommend this but it is an option. He again offered to assist in any way necessary.

b. Doug briefly discussed some outstanding concerns from the public made at pervious meeting. There was some discussion about the habitation of the building at 1343 Grassy Brook.

Both Helen and Gary stated their observation that individuals had stayed there since the owner told Doug and Mike Fontaine that he was not. We will continue to observe this and try to contact the owner when he is there.

c. There was a lengthy discussion on the current status and future of the Town Plan. The Windham Regional Commission (WRC) hearing was held on February 9th. Panel members were concerned with the moves from policy to recommendation. Doug had talked to Mr. Campany about withdrawing our request for “approval”. Doug voiced his concerns about the WRC recommendations from the 2005 plan and the fact that neither the Planning Commission members nor the Selectboard had seen them in the planning process. At the WRC meeting Doug asked the Planning Commission for a copy of the review. Doug again asked the Planning Commission for a copy of the results of the 2005 review. Mike Fontaine made the motion to withdraw the request for WRC to “approve” the plan but request they provide recommendations. Mike Winot seconded. All voted in favor. Doug will send request to WRC.

d. At the Candidates Forum held prior to the Selectboard meeting there was minimal attendance. There was discussion of elected office duties and responsibilities with those present, but there was little interest in the open elected positions.

5. Road Report:

a. Open working orders – The only current work orders were pushing back the snow banks and some minor tree work. There is a hole in the road by Dick Barkers on Hill road that needs patching – possible culvert cave in.

b. Due to changes to the specifications on the Grassy Brook Road Bridge project the bids will now be opened at the March 16th meeting.

c. Nothing has been received on the Hill Road culvert grant.

d. Mike Fontaine discussed briefly the backhoes that he had been researching. Both have been sold. He also checked on prices on new ones. A lease to own can be done for up to ten years on a new one.

6. New Business:

a. The Board discussed town meeting preparations. Doug will get a key and determine if there are enough chairs. Board members will meet at 9:00 to set-up the room.

b. Doug explained the Selectboard terms. It appears when the Board was increased from three to five members the terms were set at one and two years to get them staggered. When the one year was renewed it should have been converted to a two year to comply with state law. At town meeting the correct terms should be two and three year.

c. The draft audit is available. The board needs to have the auditors (elected or the contractor) come help explain it to us.

7. Other Business:

a. Kim again raised the issue of use of sand from the town shed. This continues to be a issue and individuals do not comply with the two bucket policy. The board decided to table this issue and set a new policy prior to next winter.

8. **Correspondence:** Correspondence was reviewed.

9. **Pay Orders:** Pay orders were reviewed. Accounts payable warrant #15, \$7,177.04 and payroll warrant #15, \$669.94 were reviewed. Mike Winot motioned they be approved. Seconded. All voted in favor, approved.

10. The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 PM. The next meeting will be March 2nd at 7:00 PM in the town office.

Respectively submitted
Douglas Wellman
Chairman

Approved at March 16, 2011 meeting