

**DRAFT**  
**Brookline Selectboard Meeting**  
**January 4, 2017**

**In Attendance:**

*Selectboard Members:* Bernardine Hoard (Chair), Bruce Mello, Stan Noga, Gwen Tanza and Dot Maggio

*Members of the Public:* Guy Tanza - Town Clerk/Cameraman, Mark Bills (Roads), Peter Meyer (Meeting House Committee), Somara Zwick (Treasurer).

**Changes to agenda:**

Bernardine Hoard moved to make the following changes to the agenda.

- a) Add time for Peter Meyer to speak
- b) Change Somara Zwick to later in the meeting
- c) State Police Contract

Dot Maggio Seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the changes to the agenda. Motion passed

**Approval of minutes taken at the December 21, 2016 meeting.**

Changes made were noted by Dot Maggio who will ask the Clerk, Peter Barus, to correct and post as FINAL.

Gwen Tanza moved to approve the minutes with the changes noted. Dot Maggio seconded the motion. All voted in favor of accepting the amended minutes from December 21, 2016.

**Scheduled members of the Public**

None

**Unscheduled members of the Public**

None

**Old Business**

Brookline Meeting House Grant: Peter Meyer confirmed receipt of the necessary paperwork which awarded \$7,955.00 to repair the steeple on the Meeting House. A

discussion ensued regarding who should sign the paperwork as it comes in. Gwen Tanza and Stan Noga both commented that the selectboard is ultimately responsible. Stan Noga made a motion that the selectboard authorize the chair to sign the grant paperwork. Dot Maggio seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion passed Bernardine signed the paperwork provided by Peter Meyer. A copy should be made for the Treasurer.

Bruce Mello added that there is currently enough money available to cover the costs of matching the grant but the balance of the fund is getting low which would make applications for matching future grants difficult. There is another grant coming up in May from the Fine Arts Council that would be for \$30,000.00. We would need to have \$15,000.00 available to get the matching grant. Bruce would like to be on record that money from the revolving loan fund would best be used to help fund the matching grant in May. The Meeting House fund may only have \$8,000.00 after the steeple work is done. He would like to board to be aware of this need before the revolving loan fund uses money to lower the deficit in the budget.

Bruce Mello also wanted to let the board know that he has been in contact with VLCT regarding petitioning the residents with a non binding article at Town Meeting to change the name of the once Historic Brookline Church, now currently known as The Brookline Meeting House to a name that indicated more clearly the role of the building as a center for Arts, Entertainment and Community Involvement. A discussion ensued about how the committee used electronic communication to solicit suggested names from the community. Bruce felt that the effort is worth his time to bring the conversation to the residents in person at this years Town Meeting on March 7th. Guy Tanza said that such a petition to get the nonbinding article would require at least 5% of the voters to sign the petition. Stan Noga asked what prompted the idea of petitioning for the name change. Bruce felt that while the survey was on the town website and that an email blast was sent out to those on the List Serve, no paper was mailed out. Many residents may not have followed up on the electronic survey and the results were close. The Brookline Meeting House received 20 votes and the next highest suggestion received 19 votes. As the discussion continued it was made clear that Bruce was acting not as a select person nor a Brookline Meeting House committee member, but as a regular citizen. There is no split committee involved and Peter Meyer (Chair of the committee) did not contest the idea of a petition to get the non binding article up for reconsideration in March.

Following that discussion, Peter Meyer brought up the request to use the Brookline Meeting House on January 20, 2017 for a small wedding ceremony to be officiated by

Guy Tanza. A small group of less than 10 people would be present. Stan Noga noted that the last use of the building for a wedding was a little more complicated as certain building deficiencies were noted by the Fire Marshall. Currently the repairs done this fall have fixed the foundation problem and the floors are level and the building is safe to use for this small group. No kitchen use is requested and everyone is aware that there is no heat in the building. If the building is not available, the couple have requested to get married in the Town Hall Conference Room.

Stan Noga made a motion to allow the Brookline Meeting House to be used on January 20, 2017 for the marriage of Aileen Hogarty to Johnny Sohl both of Brookline. Bernardine Hoard seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Guy Tanza will contact the couple with the news.

State Police Contract was received. Bruce Mello asked what the State Police have done in town. A discussion ensued about the number of hours a month we contract for (7 per month). Guy and Somara discussed the reports they receive every month on the VT State Police activity in town. (tickets/complaints/patrol etc). The contract was already approved at an earlier meeting. Bernardine signed the new 6 month contract which showed no increase over the \$1,800.00 previous 6 month contract.

### **Budget Update:**

Bruce Mello asked for more details on the \$44,000.00 deficit in the last budget. It was explained that the Town of Brookline under budgeted for legal expenses again. The Town needed to be represented at two Vt Supreme Court Cases and one US Supreme Court case needed to be addressed by council. These unexpected court cases cost the taxpayers over \$66,000.00 in a short period of time. The additional time spent researching records and tax reports added to increased employee time and reimbursement as well. There was also a review of how delinquent taxes collected within 60 days of the end of the previous year was applied to the previous year thereby reducing the revenue in the current year. The Town has in the past applied any surplus to reduce the tax base. This year we have no surplus to apply.

Somara reviewed different account practices and discussed how to retire the deficit.

- 1) Retire the deficit by voting a special article to raise taxes to retire the deficit
- 2) Take out a bank loan to retire the deficit
- 3) Take out a loan from an in house fund that has adequate surplus carryover such as the Highway fund or other Fund managed by the Town.

Somara will research Bank Rates before the next meeting. She will also help with wording the article if the deficit is to be retired by increasing taxes. It was noted that it might be possible to develop a loan contract that will come from current funds held by the town. The loan will have to be paid back in any case.

The Town Report must have all the required content submitted by January 19, 2017 in order to meet the timeline for printing and distribution.

Upon final review, Stan Noga made a motion to include \$250.00 in appropriations to the L & G Education Fund for Scholarships even though the request came in late. Gwen Tanza seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The total amount in appropriations going to the Town for vote in March is now \$6,306.00

Dot Maggio and Gwen Tanza volunteered to work on the necessary reports and articles needed for the Town Report.

**Correspondence:**

Letter from the Preservation Trust of Vermont  
US Fish and Wildlife Service Brochure  
State of Vermont Department of Taxes CLA letter = 94.17%

Bernardine Hoard made a motion to accept this month's payroll warrant #2017-27 in the amount of \$9,869.44

Bruce Mello seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**Set Agenda for next meeting on January 18, 2017**

David Jones and Bob Spencer Executive /director from WSWMD re: recycling  
Property Management plan for Sunny Lane Day Care Building discussion  
Final Budget review  
Town Meeting Final

**Adjournment:**

Gwen Tanza made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Stan Noga seconded the motion.

All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM

Submitted by: Dorothy Maggio