

**Approved Minutes**  
**Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting**  
**Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Attending**

**Selectboard:**

Dot Maggio (Chair)  
David Jones  
Bruce Mello  
Stan Noga  
Gwen Tanza

**Town Officers:** Guy Tanza (Town Clerk,  
videographer)  
Mark Bills (Road Supervisor)

**Members of the Public:**

Peter Barus (Recorder)  
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Changes to the agenda if any**

**Move old business item A to the end of the meeting before adjournment if an executive session is called for.**

**Review / Approve Regular meeting minutes from December 15, 2021**

Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes for December 15, 2021. Second by Ms. Maggio. All in favor.

**Members of the Public**

**Old Business**

**B. Budget Review**

**New appropriation request from Visiting Nurses and Hospice for VT and NH received.**

Discussion; that a request had already been received from this organization. Mr. Tanza explained that this had been resolved

**2022-2023 Budget discussion**

Ms. Maggio suggested a budget meeting the following week. Mr. Jones explained that the worksheet in current use had been modified to reflect the same format as the previous year; that a special budget meeting, and the same format, would be appropriate; and that the auditors should be asked if the format also could be used for the town report; that this would save unnecessary steps preparing the town report. Mr. Noga had researched other towns' reports, and found no standard format. Ms. Maggio noted that the proposed format was easier to work with. Mr. Jones suggested discussion of both the town budget and the Town Meeting Warnings; and that the documents used previously were on hand, if the legislature should make no changes.

**C. Recycling Review**

**Discuss information as presented by Dan Towler in email**

Ms. Maggio discussed an email from Dan Towler about the pros and cons of the recycling container with suggestions.

**Information found out about Athens collection by Gwen Tanza**

Ms. Tanza explained the schedule of one week for trash, next for recycle; trash bags sales at \$3.50 or ten for \$35.00; a \$44,000 budget line item. Mr. Jones noted that the budget was paid by taxpayers, as was the money for bags, so it didn't make sense to omit that money; that the numbers would need more work, but it appeared to exceed what Brookline would be able to accommodate; that service to the community could be better, but there were many questions remaining; and that this probably was not to be worked out prior to Town Meeting.

Mr. Tanza suggested that overall costs were about half of what Athens was paying; and discussed their higher Tax Rate, their lower Town Clerk and Treasurer salaries; and noted that this was tantamount to using the highway and recycling funds on the back of the Clerk and Treasurer. Mr. Noga discussed Jamaica's situation; it was noted that Jamaica had a transfer station; and the waste management costs at Dummerston, which Mr. Jones explained is in close proximity to the WSWMD location, and when it stopped recyclables, they stopped using bins, and transport directly to the processing center.

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Mr. Noga discussed Townshend's costs, and revenue from sales of trash bags. Mr. Tanza noted that the local service was a very good deal, fits the town well. Ms. Maggio noted that the budget for recycling had gone down.

Ms. Maggio will communicate with Mr. Towler.

Mr. Jones observed that the public vote would be the survey on what the town wanted.

**D. Town Meeting**

**Town Moderator search**

Ms. Maggio noted that David Parker had retired after 17 years; and had offered to help anyone interested in the position (with orientation); that there were several elected positions currently vacant; that on *Front Porch Forum* there was a notice along similar lines from Newfane. Ms. Maggio suggested making a list of upcoming vacancies.

**Discuss Australian Ballot requirements for 2022 Town Meeting. SB must vote at a duly warned meeting for this change if allowed by the Vermont Legislature.**

There was discussion the impact of Australian balloting on the process; that in a permanent Australian ballot process there were signature requirements, but in this case the signature requirements had been waived for towns using Australian ballot on a temporary basis. Mr. Tanza suggested that any action should be delayed awaiting pending further legislation on this. There was discussion of different interpretations towns had made of previous Australian ballot legislation; that there would probably be multiple new agenda items related to this; that it should be on the next regular meeting agenda to make sure legislative changes were complete, leaving adequate time to structure the Warning.

**New Business**

**1. The members of the Brookline Meeting House Committee would like the selectboard to review and approve the Request for Proposal for the Scope of Work that needs to be done at the Historic Church. Brattleboro Reformer will be the Newspaper used to publish the BID when approved. Read Below**

**REQUEST For Proposal To Be completed on or before October 15, 2022.**

Flashing repair. (including methods and materials):

- Provide a 64' man lift to access the side and headwalls of the steeple
- Remove trim boards and clapboards in an area around base of the clapboard steeple \*Any compromised wood needs to be replaced with like wood
- \*Clapboards at corner boards need to be trimmed at roofline making a 2" reveal from wood to slate
- Remove slate at the sidewalls
- Furnish and install 20 oz copper head and sidewall step flashing
- Reinstall previously removed trim and clapboards
- Reinstall previously removed slates

Exterior painting of the steeple. (including methods and materials):

- scraping all loose and failing paint,
- power wash to remove mildew and dirt
- sealing nailheads and knots
- oil primer
- repair and re nail any loose clapboard
- caulking
- two coats of acrylic finish
- Shutters will be scraped, primed and painted with two coats of finish paint

Ms. Maggio noted that this was not an appropriation request, that funds would be raised through donations, pledges, etc.; and discussed the language in the RFP.

Mr. Mello discussed bat remediation; painting and repair; lift rental; potential vendors. Ms. Maggio suggested that certain phraseology would be needed regarding insurance, completion date; etc. Mr. Noga discussed the condition of the clapboards and Historic National Register requirements, and noted that a gap had been pointed out below the bell area. Mr. Jones suggested meeting with Mr. Bourne.

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Ms. Maggio noted a meeting of the committee at town hall, January 11, 2022, at six p.m.

Mr. Mello discussed cost.

**Tabled.**

**Reports**

**A. Town Clerk Report - Guy Tanza**

two week break; dog licensing started; real estate quiet; end-of-year chores; preparing for elections, school budget; digitizing project continuing;

**B. Selectboard Chair Report - Dot Maggio**

**Health Officer work re: 3 domestic ducks killed & 2 injured by 2 dogs on Hill Road. - 10 Day Rabies Quarantine Ordered. ACO followed up with WCHS and town licensing requirements.**

**January 4 revisit dogs. January 10th vaccination date.**

Ms. Maggio reported ACO work with residents regarding two cats; a domestic dog complaint involving dead ducks; a quarantine for rabies (10th day); that photos showed the animals in good health; and that breed, etc., registration for rabies January 10 with the Humane Society; that they must register the dogs and make restitution to the duck owner; regarding the cat complaint, resident would like to keep the cats, one of which they recognized (and was microchipped), owned by a resident who was willing to transfer ownership as the cat refused to stay on their property.

**Current contract for Brookline's Road Materials on file**

Ms. Maggio discussed contracts for highway maintenance, etc.; the need to reissue the contract, circulated for next meeting (A. S. Clark invited).

**Request for a three year lease received for the school building. To be discussed in the Executive Session.**

**Using the Bridge/Culvert Municipal Bond money for storm related damage and culvert repairs as allowed. Repaid when FEMA reimburses Brookline. Discussion.**

Ms. Maggio discussed the municipal bond, about \$90,000 left, only for bridges and culverts; fixed payment of \$10,000 per year; FEMA reimbursement not expected until about June, would like to ask the Treasurer to look at the accounting involved in transferring the liabilities.

Mr. Tanza discussed the fund accounts, noting that the FEMA funds had been promised; that the town was in good shape; anticipating \$140,000 (75% reimbursement); the town still owing about \$20,000; and cautioned that the bond was restricted (and budgeted) to bridges and culverts; and discussed the condition of the culverts. There was discussion. Ms. Maggio noted that with eighteen months to complete the work, this would extend into the next fiscal year.

**C. Building Commissioner Report - Bruce Mello**

Mr. Mello discussed SLP heating issues; the town office rodent situation (no mice); there was discussion. Mr. Mello discussed awaiting Cota & Cota analysis of the SLP HVAC system, not working right; discussed boilers, beyond life expectancy.

Ms. Maggio will research funding for the project. Mr. Mello recommended that the system be replaced. Mr. Noga concurred that replacement would be cost-effective.

**D. Any other reports - discussions by Selectboard members**

There was discussion of recent webinars in which members had participated.

**E. Road Supervisor Report - E. Mark Bills**

Mr. Bills discussed concerns about use of Putney Mountain Road in winter, noting a message from Mr. Swing about traffic on the road, concerns about maintenance, diverting traffic in winter; discussions with Mr. Clark, that the road could not be closed legally because it goes between towns; that signage is ignored; considering options, such as applying crushed stone during thaw; that several cars from out of state had come down; the

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shady areas had ice; coming over the top it was difficult to stop. Mr. Jones suggested communication with VTRANS for ideas; there was discussion; signage saying no maintenance; concerns about liability; it was noted that Putney Mountain was a VAST snowmobile trail. There was discussion of dated signs.

Mr. Bills discussed mud season, earlier than usual; repairing ruts leaves bigger ruts; at freezing point it can be scraped, or crushed stone applied; and discussed stockpile incursions, stone coming from Jamaica (Cersosimo) ends until April; consulted with them about applying stone immediately that will hold in the Spring; and would visit the pit before closing to apply stone right away; coordinating with Mr. Clark, monitoring the roads morning and night; and noted that the material forms a good base.

**Current road conditions**

There was discussion of an excavator lease for Summer culvert and FEMA-related repairs. Mr. Bills discussed machinery bookings, having reserved an over-rail mower \$3,200/week for the first mowing, first week of July; and looking at other machines that may include a mower, will report if a promising arrangement is found.

Ms. Maggio noted 100% FEMA reimbursement for some of that work.

Mr. Bills noted a second load of salt, the bay was full, sand in good shape; and discussed the professionalism and knowledge of FEMA representatives, and that Ms. Maggio had greatly assisted, obtaining GPS data.

Ms. Maggio signed and circulated the Certificate of Highway Mileage, no changes; 4.95 miles of class 2, 11.91 of class three, 1.47 of class 4, one mile of trail; 16.86 total miles of road.

**Communications**

**Regular Mail**

Free public library, December 27, 2021, thanks for \$300 appropriation in August.

Valley Cares, donation request.

Vermont, December 23, 2021 Education Grand List, CLA, etc.

**E-Mail**

- Gary Lavorgna had suggested contacting John Ballou regarding interest in serving on the selectboard.
- Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire request for appropriation.
- Dan Towler on the pros and cons of the recycling in Brookline

**Pay Orders**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2022-26 dated January 2, 2022, in the amount of \$603.69.

Second by Mr. Jones. All in favor

It was noted that the Rescue Inc. contract was flat this year, up 1% a year next 2 years. Ms. Maggio discussed the format.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2022-27 dated January 5, 2022, in the amount of \$19,314.37. Second by Mr. Jones.

**Set Agenda**

**Special Budget Meeting Wednesday January 12, 2022 @ 6:30 PM (finalize Warning, Voting, budget, for Town Meeting)**

**Regular Selectboard Meeting Wednesday January 19, 2022 @ 6:30 PM**

**A. (Old Business) The Selectboard may elect to go into an executive session. Review - Discuss - Lease Contract for the school building currently known as Suzy's Little Peanuts Daycare. A motion may be made to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the town's lease contract with Suzy's Little Peanuts owner Suzy Coutermarsh would place the town at a disadvantage, because the selectboard risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses the proposed contract terms in public.**

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Ms. Maggio so moved. Second by Mello. All in favor.

**A second motion may be made at this time to enter into executive session to discuss the town's lease contract with Suzy Coutermarsh under the provisions of Title 1, Section 212 (a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes.**

Ms. Maggio moved to enter executive session for a legal matter. Second by Mr. Jones. All in favor. The selectboard entered executive session at 8:44 pm, and resumed regular session at 9:05 p.m., with no actions taken.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Maggio moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Noga.

The meeting was Adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, January 14, 2022*