

Draft Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Present:

Selectboard:

Dorothy Maggio (Chair)

Bruce Mello

Stanley Noga

Town Officers:

E Mark Bills (Rd. Supervisor)

Guy Tanza (Town Clerk) by Zoom

Public: Noone

- Call meeting to order at 7:06 PM-8:42PM
- No changes to agenda
- Members of the public
 - Scheduled-none

Review/Approve Minutes

- Dot Maggio tabled review of January 18, 2023 minutes.
- Review **minutes of Tuesday, January 24, 2023 Selectboard Special meeting** at town office at 6:30PM. Stan Noga made motion to approve minutes. Seconded by Bruce Mello. No corrections necessary, minutes unanimously approved as presented. Minutes topic discussed was Town Meeting and Warned Articles.

New Business:

- Dot Maggio reminded the Selectboard of **upcoming ARPA resource meetings** being held February 6, 2023. There are two sessions, one in Wilmington at 10:00 AM, and one in Bellows Falls at 2:30 PM. Discussion will involve additional ARPA resources with roundtable discussions. Dot and Stan will probably carpool to the 2:30PM session in Bellows Falls.
- **Policing Seminar** to be held February 9, 2023 at the new VEMS Academy from 10-12PM It is offered by the Windham County Sheriff's. To be a discussion of all aspects of policing in Windham County, including history, costs, initiatives, etc. Currently Brookline has no contracted police services. Dot will notify citizens and seek input from citizens via the Lavorgna listserv.
- **Meet with Auditors.** Dot advised that auditors would like to meet with the Selectboard in the future regarding processes and timing of the Town Report. SB decided to finalize the budget for FY25 in the fall of 2023 to enable a more timely document. Mr. Mello reminded the SB that it may have to wait for a few things, such as sand and salt bids, etc.

- **OWL Camera System** Discussion. Dot described the ease of use, sound quality, and visuals quality as very satisfactory. **Dot recommended purchasing the system** subject to review of the Purchase Policy to assure that the purchase is made in compliance with policy. SB consensus was to proceed.

Old Business:

- **Budget 2023/2024.** Dot Maggio suggested creating the budget and **Town Report** in future years by an earlier date, in the fall. As a result, he SB will need to advise entities seeking appropriations to forward their requests to the town much earlier. Stan provided further information about last minute questions regarding the proposed FY24 budget that he was able to assist the assistant treasurer with on the last the day available for corrections.
- **Town Warning Finalization**
 - Dot made motion to approve the amounts listed in **Article 6-General Fund** as follows: “Shall the voters authorize general fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$179,262.00 of which \$133,438.00 shall be raised by taxes and \$45,824.00 by non-tax revenues?” Stan seconded it. No discussion. The contents of Article 6 was unanimously approved.
 - Dot made motion to approve the amounts listed in **Article 7-Highway Fund** as follows. “Shall the voters authorize highway fund expenditures of \$409,520.00, of which \$355,722.00 shall be raised by taxes and \$53,798.00 by non-tax revenues?” Mr. Noga seconded said motion. No discussion. Motion was unanimously approved.
 - Dot made motion to approve the addition of **Article 16-WRMUED School Director** which is “To elect one (1) West River Modified Union Education District school director, who is a resident of Brookline, for a 3-year term.” Bruce Mello seconded said motion. No discussion. It was unanimously approved.
 - Dot will ask via listserv for a volunteer to manage the **potluck supper** just prior to Town Meeting.
 - Stan suggested for future years changes to the Town Report to include 1.) reporting annual comparative municipal & educational tax rates; 2.) Town Report Title page and 3.) Title of Comparative Budget.
 - Dot Maggio stated that Guy Tanza forwarded to her an email from the **VT State Archives** reminding all towns to submit a copy of their recent Town Report to them. The VT Archives Department requires PDF format and a specific file name format.
 - **ARPA review of current funds and discussion.** Bruce Mello advised that for the next meeting he will offer a list of ARPA uses. He desires a minimum of \$50,000.00 be dedicated to the Brookline Meetinghouse. Discussion ensued. SB felt it appropriate to evaluate the full spectrum of potential ARPA money uses. Dot reminded the SB that whatever amount of ARPA funds Brookline sends to DVFiber before May 2023 will be matched by Vermont Community Broadband. DVFiber suggested that Brookline donate \$10,000. Dot suggested Brookline donate \$5,000, which in conjunction with the match, will provide \$10,000 to DVFiber.

Reports and Updates

Road supervisor

- Mr. Bills started the **generator** for the recent power outages.
- Dealt with recent storm damage.
- **Installed plow wing** on grader in anticipation of upcoming snow.
- Discussed making sure that **water well is on the generator** circuit due to hot water heat and needs of furnace.
- Performing **work at Daycare** building.
- Recently approached by Jeff Nugent of WRC about **driveway culvert inventory** and what has been town policy about replacement of initial driveway culverts. Mark will inquire of WRC if program is a **for fee management contract or free service**.
- Meghan Brunk of District 2 **AOT sent to town paperwork** for upcoming reports and applications for grant monies.
- Follow-up on structures grants.

Highway Grants Report

- Highway package received from District 2 AOT and will review and have overview and timelines for next SB meeting.
- WRC is changing its Highway Committee to a Highway Advisory Committee to be consistent with other state planning committees. Committee membership will be increased from four towns to all towns in county. It will better coordinate needs of all towns and wider input.
- Per VLCT seminar, Stan outlined information regarding state/federal grants and how states are required to have matches to feds as towns due to state. \$76,000,000 highway funds available state wide and no apparent use for it. It may possibly be state match with feds.
- Provided input on generator to assist Mr. Bills and SB.

Building Commissioner

- Daycare center appears to appreciate the change to heat pumps. There have been few issues with it. Better heating with new system.
- Bruce and Mark will familiarize themselves with using **heat pump timers** to further save the daycare center expense.
- Mr. Mello asked if anyone remembers a efficiency program through the state which had either 2.1 million or 2.1 billion dollars available for efficiency in Vermont municipalities. Dot and Stan made known to Mr. Mello an efficiency program known as **Act 172, Municipal Energy and Resiliency Program** which is being administered through the Windham Regional Commission. Contacts at Windham Regional Commission are Margot Ghia and Michael McConnell. Stan will send WRC advisements of Act 172 program to Mr. Mello.
- Mr. Mello asked if Brookline's legislators will be invited to the town meeting. Ultimate feelings of SB were to not ask legislators to attend the town meeting given the specific monetary issues in the budget and other topics to be discussed.
- Mr. Bills and Mr. Mello described the Heat Pump System and the option of using timer settings to keep heating and electric costs to a minimum. Tenant has not chosen to do so.

- Mr. Bills and Mr. Mello described work being done in attic air exchanger area.

Selectboard Chair Report

- **BRIC Grant** and its RFP need to be dealt with in near future. Ms. Maggio will submit RFP to Listserv via State and/or County.
- **Lisa Sabetto of WRC** recently contacted Dot Maggio and Guy Tanza about the BRIC grant.
- Dot Maggio advised the SB that the CLA and COD data in the recent letter from the Division of Property Valuation and Review (PVR) means that the town needs to consider have an **reappraisal** performed. At a future SB meeting, the SB should discuss executing the contract which it had been sent by NEMRC's reappraisal division to Brookline.
- Dot Maggio reminded that Kim Friedman had contacted the town seeking a representative on a **Solar Panel Site Committee**. Bruce Mello agreed to follow-up with Mrs. Friedman by next meeting.
- Dot Maggio asked that all **road work** applications and **time lines** for reporting be a topic on the next SB agenda.
- Dot attended a seminar sponsored by **BDCC** and spoke at by Kate Buckley and Mr. Wagoner regarding **Federal Funding Assistance Programs**.
- Dot referenced information received from **VT Emergency Management Program**.

Town Clerk's Report

No report submitted.

Communications

- See Chair Report above.
- **Efficiency Vermont communication response needed by 04/01/2023 for lighting in town buildings.**
- **Comcast letter regarding network improvements. Channel changes made.**

Pay Orders

- **Payroll Order 23-31 of date 02/01/2023 i/a/o \$1,552.19, per M. Maggio offered for vote. Mr. Noga seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved.**
- **Accounts Payable Warrant 23-30 dated 02/01/2023 i/a/o \$5,861.23. Seconded by Mr. Mello. No Discussion. Approved unanimously subject to review of Brattleboro Salvage payment of invoice versus payment.**

Other

Brief discussion about contacting **Moderator** to present Town Warning and discuss issues which may arise. Stan stated that he has sent appropriate things to Mr. Parker. Mr. Parker also replied that he'd like to meet with SB.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stan Noga, Jr.

Highway Grants Report

- Brookline has received the \$6700 from the state in payment of the grants-in-Aid grant pertaining to Hill Rd.
- Assistant treasurer, Melissa Brown, advised me that Brookline has received its quarterly road mileage funds in the amount of \$10,000.
- Dot Maggio asked if there was any desire by the selectboard for the town of Brookline to purchase an iPad for its highway and culvert transactions with AOT. Not having used an iPad to date, for that purpose, it is an unknown.

Building Commissioner

- Accounting approach to monies received via the lease of the former Brookline Elementary School to Suzies Little Peanuts Day Care – Brookline, was discussed. Bruce Mello desires that the lease income be shown as an account balance as opposed to town income. Different examples of other accounts were discussed. Members expressed their preferences as to how the monies were demonstrated in the town financials. Stan prefers that the lease income show as income in the town's budget. Others suggested just an account showing a balance. Melissa Brown will be consulted to determine what is possible.
- As a part of the town financials, Dot Maggio suggested that the selectboard be presented by the Treasurer with the prior month-end financials for the first selectboard meeting each month.
- Mr. Mello advised the SB that Peter Meyer contacted him to advise that one of the heat pump units was impacted with ice and snow. Mr. Mello and Mr. Bills were involved with cleaning out ice and snow from said condensing unit. Mr. Bills will be erecting a small roof over said unit to keep ice, rain and snow off that unit in the future.

Selectboard Chair Report

- Dorothy stated that a supply of Covid-19 Test Kits was received by the town from the VT Dept of Health for handing out to citizens as needed.
- While attempting to notice place notice on the local Front Porch Forum website an advertisement for the Lavorgna Listserv, the Front porch Forum announced it considered the Listserv a competitor and would not allow said notice to be posted on their website.
- Dot Maggio created a notice of selectboard recording clerk vacancy with job description, pay amount and requirements of the position. She asked for SB review and approval for its use in advertising for the position. Said approval was given.
- Dot requested a workbee meeting with Stan to discuss the needs of the future position of a Brookline selectboard administrative assistant. She also desired to discuss the formalities of handling previously used ARPA monies whereby not all monies authorized had not been expended and the procedure to return unspent money to the ATPA account.
- Dorothy suggested to Mark Bills that he use the "winter down time" to finish FEMA paperwork regarding Putney Mountain Rd. Repairs and upgrades. Mark stated that he will do so.
- Dorothy stated that she would create and forward to the daycare tenant notice of the town meeting to be held the evening of March 6th and potential need for a rain date on the evening of March 7th.
- Dorothy stated she had followed up with Judy Acampora clarifying payment amounts to Brattleboro Salvage.
- Dorothy mentioned the Selectboard Report that will be submitted with the town report. Each selectboard member will contribute their thoughts to be constructed into one report.

- Workbee stated above to occur on this coming Monday.

Communications:

- **Emails**
 - Sara Webb emailed Dot stating that she will be unable to coordinate the potluck supper the day of Town Meeting.
 - Dorothy Maggio stated that Kim Freedman had contacted her about potential solar panel locations in Brookline. Mrs. Friedman is soliciting a Brookline representative to assist in locating solar panel sights in this general area. Bruce Mello will contact Mrs. Friedman, who he knows, and invite her to a future Brookline select board meeting.
 - Dot Maggio asked of Mr. Noga if there was an update regarding Rescue Inc. Mr. noga stated that he had attended last evening's Rescue Inc. Meeting. The rate assessed upon Brookline for this year will remain the same rate as last year. The assessment rate will increase by 1% for each of the next two years. Rescue Inc has performed services all throughout Vermont and has nurtured relationships with grace cottage hospital and state of Vermont.
 - Dot Maggio stated that she will attend an informational meeting of the Windham County Sheriff's Department taking place on February 9th 2023 from 10:00 AM to noon. Said meeting will occur at the new Vermont Emergency Management Services Academy on Route 30 at approximately the Newfane - Townsend town line.
 - Dot Maggio read to the board the annual advisement letter from the real estate division of the Vermont Department of Taxes. Brookline's EGL value is \$72,504,435. The EEGL valuation is \$85,110,582. The CLA is 85.19%. The COD is 15.07%.

Prior Minutes Approval:

- Draft minutes of 12/21/2022 select board meeting reviewed. No corrections necessary. Dot Maggio made motion to approve the Draft minutes of 12/21/2022 as presented. Stan Noga seconded, approved unanimously.

Information Offered:

- Bruce Mello stated that a possibility exists whereby taxes in the future may become assessed on income as opposed to property value.
- Dot Maggio offered that she was recently advised by a school official that a consolidation of educational resources in this district is in the works.
- Bruce Mellow referenced a prior discussion of the select board whereby said board pledged to match up to \$15,000 of committed monies of the meeting house committee with/from ARPA funds.
- Discussion of and accounts payable amount of \$127.39 is to be investigated by Bruce Mello. It pertains to services of SLPDC. Clarification is required.

Prior Minutes Approval:

- Dot Maggio requested review of January 4th, 2023 selectboard minutes. Mr. Noga created said minutes and abstains from comment on accuracy. Mr. Noga presented two versions of minutes prior to this meeting for January 4th. After sending the first version he carefully re-read it and corrected mistakes which he found within it. Said corrected version was forwarded to select board members at a late point in time prior to today's select board meeting. Upon discussion it appeared that errors were corrected in the second version. Dot Maggio motioned to approve the apparently corrected version of minutes of January 4th. Mr. Mello seconded said motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Tentative Topics for Next Selectboard Meeting:

- Town Budget
- ARPA funds and potential uses
- Town report

Meeting Adjourned at 8:51 PM. 51 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Stanley Noga Jr.

Temporary Secretary