

Present

Selectboard:
David Jones (Chair)
Gwen Tanza
Bruce Mello
Joseph Dutton

Town Officers:
Guy Tanza (Town Clerk, videographer)

Members of the Public:
Peter Barus (Recorder)
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Review changes to agenda if any

Scheduled members of the public

Unscheduled members of the public

Approve Minutes

Minutes from November 4, 2020 Regular Meeting

New Business

Mountain Road Property Situation

Ms. Tanza had forwarded email regarding a boundary issue. Mr. Dutton noted that this year there had been construction and excavation projects, and had heard suggestions that zoning be considered. Mr. Jones noted that this was not on the agenda for discussion, and could be an agenda item for a future meeting.

Budget Planning Schedule

Mr. Jones discussed the idea of a special meeting for budget only, between regular meetings. There was consensus on holding a **special meeting Wednesday, December 9, 2020**. Mr. Jones will post the Warning

Town Meeting

Mr. Jones discussed emails sent to several legislators and VLCT; and noted that a videoconference or hybrid Town Meeting is disallowed, to date; that legislative action seems unlikely in time for Town Meeting Day; that there had been legislation allowing a Selectboard to hold Australian Ballots for a Town Meeting. There was discussion; that an informational meeting would be required; that a vote could be warned and held to decide on Australian Ballot, and there could be an informational meeting; that given all requirements, all candidates for elective positions would have to self-nominate; that the timing appeared unfeasible; that a physical Town Meeting, adhering to state restrictions, would be on a Monday night; that one person per 100 square feet is permitted indoors, to a maximum of 75; that the governor might establish protocols in light of recent increases in infection rates. There was discussion of alternative locations and occupancy allowed at the BMH; that under current guidelines capacity could be 50% of the Fire Marshall's designated capacity, or could be 1 person per 100 square feet.

Mr. Jones noted that there would be two meetings before the Warning must be approved, and polled the members on the Australian Ballot. Ms. Tanza suggested self nomination was not feasible. Mr. Mellow, that it was not realistic. Mr. Dutton suggested that it will be determined by available alternatives; that too many people would feel unsafe attending Town Meeting under current conditions, in any of the available locations; that Australian Ballot might be the best choice. Mr. Jones expressed concerns for public safety.

There was discussion of postponement; the logistics of Australian Balloting; enrolling self-nominated candidates far enough in advance; that social distancing and masks would be unsafe in an enclosed space; that an outdoor venue would be best; that the present Monday night schedule was a problem; that the selectboard can set the time of Town Meeting, although not the day; that everyone could participate safely outdoors; that this could help build community as well. There was discussion of sound systems; attendance by elders in cold weather; that Australian Ballot may be the only option; that informational meetings are allowed by videoconference; and about the possibility of the budget being voted down, requiring a second meeting.

The matter will be on the **agenda for next meeting**.

Old Business

Review Traffic Ordinance

Mr. Jones explained that the previous discussion on the Ordinance had focused on current speed limits; that after discussion consensus had been that some limits might be changed. Mr. Dutton had read the Ordinance.

There was discussion of other locations where limits might be changed; that the posted limits were not inappropriate; about changing the 40 MPH section of Hill Road to 30 MPH; that changing the limit was not likely to have much effect on violations; that changing speed limits is a complex process requiring an engineering study by statute; that violations could be addressed by other means.

Mr. Jones polled the members; it was suggested that radar signs be implemented; that the 40 MPH limit is unsafe; that a police presence has not been effective; that limits are consistent around town; that there are many homes and driveways in a 40 MPH zone; that the real problem is violators.

It was noted that grants were no longer available. There was consensus that the Ordinance would remain unchanged.

Mr. Jones suggested budgeting to purchase a radar sign.

Building Update

Mr. Mello discussed the source protection plan; a waiver renewal application; that the state informs when renewal is required; a vendor for HVAC systems work; postponing the septic and furnace check with Mr. Bills; a site visit by Jeffers; water system leak and service by Mr. Bovat (\$521.75 pay order); improved communications with Jeffers; \$175 refund for lightbulbs; \$14,651.12 building fund balance;

Summary / Update / Reports

Guy Tanza – Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza reported that the office has reverted to appointment-only for title researchers and a few others; that the record digitizing project was moving well; and noted that much can be accomplished by phone.

Highways & Roads

Mark Bills – Road Supervisor (not in attendance)

By voicemail Mr. Bills had reported grading, maintenance generally ok; and had asked about a tree branch between recycling area and the ball field, and an offer from a neighbor to clean it up for the wood; there was consensus in favor.

Communications

There was discussion of the recycle bin; vandalism; increased use; hiring maintenance person; that removal of the bin would require a vote by the town.

Email

- Act 250 subdivision application for a property straddling town line with Dummerston
- from Peter Meyers re: recycling bins costs
- from Triple-T re: ongoing vandalism at recycling container, padlock cut off
- from Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force re: appropriation request,
- request to use BMH for a memorial service (declined)
- from Brattleboro Development C. C. re: offer to attend meeting with funding request (declined)
- from WRC re: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan grant application (Dec 4 deadline, Mr. will submit the application)

Regular Mail

- Triple-T
- The *Commons* re: solicitation
- Project Feed the Thousands re: solicitation
- Youth Services re: appropriation request
- American Red Cross re: appropriation request
- American Red Cross re: donation request

Pay Orders

Payroll

Mr. Jones polled the members on their review of the Payroll Warrants. No questions.

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2020-71, dated 11/11/20, in the amount of \$2,003.62. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in favor.**

Accounts Payable

Mr. Jones polled the members on their review of the Accounts Payable Warrants. No questions

Mr. Jones moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2020-74, dated 11/18/20, in the amount of \$5,984.85. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in favor.**

Set agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday December 2, 2020

- Town Meeting under pandemic guidelines
- Recycle bin discussion
- Selectboard term duration
- Fully remote meetings

Mr. Tanza will consult VLCT regarding statutes where terms of office are defined, and how they can be changed

There was discussion of state guidance on public meetings under increased pandemic restrictions.

Mr. Jones proposed that meetings be fully remote. There was discussion and consensus that the next meeting will be conducted remotely, with Mr. Jones attending at the Town Office.

Adjournment

Mr. Jones moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, November 19, 2020