

## Draft Minutes

### Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

**Present:**

**Selectboard (SB):**

Dorothy Maggio (DM) (Chair)  
Stanley Noga (SN) (Vice-Chair)  
Bruce Mello (BM)  
Paul Madalinski (PM)  
Somara Zwick (SZ)

**Town Officers:**

E Mark Bills (EMB) (Highway  
Supervisor)  
Vanessa Ballou (VB) (Recording Clerk),  
via Zoom

**Public:**

Beatrice Birch (BB)  
Inner Fire Seeker  
David Parker (DP)  
Lee Anne Parker (LAP)  
FactTV online

**1. Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.**

**2. Any Changes to the Agenda**

The discussion of the Town's roads was moved to the beginning of item 8. Reports and Updates.

**3. Members of the Public**

**Scheduled Members of the Public**

A. Cindy Lawley - Trespassing Seekers from Inner Fire concerns

This item tabled as Cindy Lawley was not present at the meeting.

B. David Parker - Concerns regarding Inner Fire Seekers/program

DP expressed his concern about the number and frequency of Seekers who are reported or found to be wandering unaccompanied outside of Inner Fire grounds – including instances when the police were called to assist in finding them, instances when Seekers were away overnight, and a recent instance when a Seeker was walking over the top of a beaver dam during the recent flooding. DP expressed concern that this is a public safety issue, and that the supervision provided the Seekers appears lax and raises questions about whether Inner Fire is operating under their permit guidelines.

DM summarized information available from Act 250 regarding Inner Fire's application and guidelines as well as the process for submitting complaints. She suggested that the SB hold further discussions during the second SB meeting on September 20 or at a special meeting. DM clarified that the SB can provide a forum for discussion but has no jurisdiction regarding the Inner Fire business.

Beatrice Birch (BB) expressed regret for the Seekers who wandered unaccompanied, provided additional details about those Seekers, clarified that the Seekers are instructed not to leave unaccompanied and not to trespass. She also clarified that towards the end of their program, Seekers may be given permission to walk unaccompanied along the road. A Seeker attended the meeting and provided a testimonial of the benefits and improvements she has experienced in her life from her participation in the Inner Fire program.

DM closed this portion of the meeting stating that the SB will decide whether to discuss this further in September during a regular meeting or at a special meeting.

C. Lee Anne Parker (LAP) - Brookline Meeting House (BMH)

LAP presented two issues for discussion. The first concerned expanding the scope of work for the planned steeple painting to include painting the front doors. The SB agreed that the original Request for Proposal (RFP) should be reissued to include painting the front doors with the work to be scheduled for Spring of 2024.

The second issue concerned changes to the foundation scope of work. LAP and the SB discussed the request for an additional \$3,000 due to an increase in operating costs that will bring the total to \$32,800. An additional requested change was to consider the 30-inch excavation depth as a guideline under certain circumstances – such as if a boulder that is providing structural support is encountered within the 30-inch depth under the foundation. The SB agreed with this approach; it should be addressed in the scope change as well.

The SB discussed the status of the Jon Saccoccio report, the bid for a follow-up investigation of moisture by evaluating the conditions below the foundation, and the potential overlap with the Energy Committee including work that might be covered by a potential grant from MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program) or other sources.

**Unscheduled Members of the Public**

A. Beatrice Birch

See 3.B.

**4. Review/Approve Draft Minutes**

A. Regular Minutes – August 2, 2023

The SB discussed minor changes to the draft minutes. DM motioned to approve the minutes as amended; PM seconded; motion approved unanimously.

**5. Pay Orders**

A. Accounts Payable Warrant

DM made a motion to approve accounts **payable warrant 2408** dated August 16, 2023 in the amount of \$24,033.38; SZ seconded. Following a brief discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Payroll Warrant

DM made a motion to approve **payroll warrant 2407** dated August 16, 2023 in the amount of \$1,902.30; BM seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

C. Check Warrant for Wire Transfer

DM made a motion to approve **check warrant 2407A** dated August 14, 2023 in the amount of \$165,500.95; SN seconded; following a discussion the motion was approved unanimously. The discussion concerned a \$50 shortage in the wire transfer and status of the ownership papers. The Town will pay the outstanding \$50 in the next check warrant cycle.

**6. New Business**

A. Reorganization of the Chart of Accounts

After summarizing the background and rationale for reorganizing the Chart of Account, SZ motioned to approve the reorganization of the Chart of Accounts for the Town of Brookline up to approximately \$300 for that process; DM seconded; motion approved unanimously.

B. Sam Bourne - Add to preferred vendor list

DM motioned to make Sam Bourne one of the Town's preferred providers and add him to the preferred vendor list; PM seconded; motion approved unanimously.

- C. Request to support Trunk & Treat event at SLP (Suzy's Little Peanuts) for Halloween  
SLP has asked if the Town would like to collaborate with them to host a community Trunk & Treat on October 31<sup>st</sup> at 3:30 PM. DM made a motion for SB approval to reach out to the community to see if there is support to have a community Trunk & Treat; SN seconded; the motion approved unanimously.
- D. Town Equipment Purchase -  
DM made a motion that the SB consider buying a town truck; BM seconded. SZ presented a financial analysis of the cost of buying a truck. The SB discussed the details. Following the discussion, the SB voted on the motion that the Town consider purchasing a truck; BM seconded; approved unanimously.
- E. Shall the selectboard hold a special meeting to discuss the type of truck and how to finance a town truck.  
DM made a motion that the Town consider holding a special meeting to discuss the type of truck; BM seconded. The SB discussed options for funding the truck, need for an additional person to support EMB, need to establish a budget for the truck purchase, and agreed to table further discussion until the next meeting when more details would be available.

**7. Unfinished Business**

- A. Mower attachment - Tracking/Delivery expectations  
DM and EMB are waiting for the delivery tracking number.
- B. Knot Weed in Brookline - meet with Henry Carr arborist  
DM will follow-up with Henry Carr about spraying the knotweed sometime in September.
- C. Website Update - M. Ray (MR) working with G. Tanza (GT)  
Following a meeting with SN regarding the Town's contract terms, MR executed the contract. PM will be the primary contact for the SB and will ask MR to be copied on all email communications.

**8. Reports and Updates**

- G. Highway Supervisor - E. Mark Bills
  - i. Projects Completed include the following:
    - FEMA Work – July 2021 Storm
      - o culvert clear out on Putney Mountain Road
      - o ditches lined with stone on Putney Mountain
      - o old pavement removed and new gravel applied on Putney Mountain Road in preparation for the Bazin Brothers work;
      - o gravel has been spread on Bennett Road to create a crown for water shedding
    - Grant & Aid Program – July 2023 Storm
      - o stone lining of ditches on Hill and Kirsch Roads is 99% completed
  - ii. Projects Planned/Remaining
    - FEMA Work – July 2021 Storm  
Installation of culverts with concrete headstones and stone lining remains to be completed on Holland Road; EMB expects the work will be completed by the end of August.
    - July 2023 Storm  
A culvert and cracked headwall on Ellen Ware Road needs repair. This work may require an RFP.

- iii. Other – TBD  
See above regarding Ellen Ware Road.
- A. Highway Grants/Contracts – S. Noga
  - i. Grant in Aid Project - Hill Road & Kirsh Road  
See update from EMB above.
  - ii. Contracts
    - DPS (Department of Public Safety) has a grant that covers costs not covered by FEMA. The application period has been extended to December 31, 2023. SN will follow-up.
    - MTAP (Municipal Technical Assistance Program) Update  
The SB discussed possibilities of working with MTAP.
  - iii. Other - TBD
- B. FEMA Update
  - i. Storm 4621 from 2021 - D. Maggio
    - Remaining tasks include completion of the Holland Hill work and Bazin Brothers work.
  - ii. Storm 4720 from 2023 - S. Noga
    - David Zarnick is leaving the area and a new person is taking over the Vermont FEMA efforts.
  - iii. TBD  
The Town will be working with FEMA to reconcile what Town projects have been completed and how much has already been paid and billed to FEMA.
- C. Building Commissioner – B. Mello
  - i. Daycare Building
    - Minor plumbing repairs were completed by SLP.
    - BM and EMB are completing other minor building repairs.
    - Cota & Cota will drain nonfunctional pipes.
  - ii. Brookline Meeting House  
See 3.C. above for details concerning the BMH.
  - iii. Round School House, Garden, & Outhouse – Woodshed
    - The historic building plaque will be mounted.
    - Outhouse – woodshed area clean-up is on the list.
  - iv. Other – TBD  
None.
- D. Energy Commission – B. Mello
  - i. MERP Schedule  
The Energy Commission meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. The Town needs to get the assessment applications in; the deadline is January 2024. Google folders have been set up to capture details concerning each town building to support the application.
  - ii. Other – TBD  
None.
- E. Selectboard Chair Report – D. Maggio
  - i. Appointment of Jon Ballou to the Brookline Meeting House Committee

DM made a motion to appoint Jon Ballou to the Brookline Meeting House committee; PM seconded; no discussion; the motion approved unanimously.

- ii. Budget planning schedule – TBD  
Detailed discussion tabled.
- iii. Hazard Mitigation Committee -w/ WRC  
No update yet on timing of meeting.
- iv. ALTA - Purchase of Wheeled Excavator JCB 110  
Discussed above.
- v. Other – TBD
  - o Vermont would like to have another Green Up Day on August 26<sup>th</sup> to clean up after the July storm. They will supply garbage bags and publicize the event.
  - o SEVCA (Southeastern Vermont Community Action) has asked for an appropriation of \$3.00 per person for a total of \$1,590.

F. Planning Committee - S. Zwick

The SB will vote on appointing Oliver Ames and other interested individuals at the next SB meeting. The next Planning Committee meeting is targeted for early September.

G. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

This agenda item moved to the beginning of Reports and Updates and is summarized above.

H. Any Other Topics / Discussions from Selectboard Members That Doesn't Require A Vote  
None.

**9. Communications**

A. Regular Mail

B. Email

DM summarized the communications the Town received including a request for a donation of \$1,000, a donation of \$75 for the BMH, an offer of assistance from a resident, an invitation from the Town of Putney to their planning meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup>, and the Newfane Planning Commission has reached out to the Town to invite them to a meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup> or in October.

C. Other

SN reported that there was training hosted by the Windham Regional Commission at the Putney Fire Station on August 24<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to 3 PM on the new software for a Vermont transportation planning tool. Participants should register online by August 21, 2023.

**10. Set Agenda for next meeting on September 6, 2023**

- A. Inner Fire
- B. RFP for painting - BMH
- C. Assessment of mold - BMH
- D. Consideration of a truck
- E. FEMA update
- F. MTAP Committee update
- G. Oliver Ames or Planning Committee appointments
- H. 911 Update

**11. Executive Session if required**

Not required.

**12. Exit Executive Session**

Not required.

**13. Adjourn the Meeting**

Meeting Adjourned at **9:12 PM**.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vanessa Ballou  
Recording Clerk