

Approved Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, September 1, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
(videoconference)

Attending

Selectboard:

Dot Maggio (Chair)
David Jones
Bruce Mello
Stan Noga

Town Officers:

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

Members of the Public:

Win Clark
Chuck Tattersall
Peter Barus (Recorder)
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Review changes to agenda if any

The Chair moved that Scheduled Members Of The Public be advanced on the agenda whenever members of the public are scheduled at meetings.

Open/Review/Discuss/Vote on Sand Bid for winter 2021-22

Ms. Maggio opened the single bid, from A. S. Clark & Sons, for FY 2021-22, proposing 14 cubic-yard loads at \$23.00 per yard, delivered to town yard at request of the road supervisor. It was noted that a sample had been provided as required, from "same vendor, same pit." There was discussion; that prices were up from last year; the board examined the sand sample.

Ms. Maggio moved that the board accept the proposal from A. S. Clark, for ¾ in sand, at \$23.00 per cubic yard, delivered and piled in the shed and mixed with salt. Second by Mr. Noga.

In discussion, ¾ in sand was defined as the having particles no larger than ¾-inch. Mr. Bills explained the use of sand and salt on the roads.

On the Motion, **all in favor.**

**Review / Approve minutes from
August 12, 2021 Special Meeting**

Ms. Maggio had emailed to members and provided hard copy.

Mr. Mello moved to accept the minutes for the August 12 Special Meeting as written. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

August 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for August 18 as amended. Second by Mr. Noga. **Passed with Ms. Tanza abstaining.**

**Scheduled members of the public
Unscheduled members of the public
(Moved up from Reports)**

Mr. Tattersall and Dan Towler arrived.

Ms. Maggio explained the situation that occurred at the Tattersall property; that Mr. Bills had estimated the flooding hazard mitigation expense at approximately \$2,000 noting that the town usually avoids work on personal property, but that this case involved three property owners within a 300 yard area (Bush-Bell, Duke and Tattersall). Mr. Tattersall noted that an LLC was also involved.

Mr. Tattersall asked what the status of the matter was, whether anyone had contacted the LLC; and noted a right-of-way on the Bush-Bell property; that one parcel had been deeded to an owner's son, but the parent nevertheless wished to be part of negotiations; and that there was a time constraint of October 1.

Ms. Maggio will draft a letter to Brookline Woodland LLC about work that may be done on their property to address this matter.

Mr. Bills noted that the problem runs over the boundary, and without fixing that area, the rest could not be fixed; that sediment had been pushed into the stream causing it to jump banks and threaten the Tattersall property; that the problem was outside the Tattersall land.

Mr. Tattersall suggested that substantial blockage would have to be cleared before the other work could start.

Ms. Maggio will contact the other land owners, and inform them of plans to address the problem.

Mr. Noga asked if this was a historic problem or a recent development. It was noted that Mr. Tattersall had been resident 30 years, and it had not happened until Irene eroded the bank at a certain area, and this was the eventual result. Mr. Noga asked about the need for culvert replacement at the road site. Mr. Bills explained that this was a state issue, relating to watershed. Mr. Noga asked if other such conditions existed. Mr. Bills explained that where class 2 highway state standards applied, failed culverts would be replaced by a larger culvert; that there was a list of infrastructures due for upgrade; and anything over 36 inches diameter requires state oversight and compliance; that at Tattersall's property the culvert was already in process with the state, awaiting funding, possibly two more years, but there were some exceptions for emergency conditions; that the town would want the problem fixed, but must work within the town right of way (center to 25 ft); and explained routine maintenance.

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Ms. Maggio explained that a verbal agreement and formal agreement would likely follow.

Mr. Towler was recognized, and made no comment.

Mr. (Win) Clark discussed a Rescue, Inc., meeting on emergency medical coverage for the Town of Brookline, September 16, on Canal street at 6:30, Ms. Daigneault and Ms. Maggio planned to attend.

New Business

ARPA (America Rescue Plan Act) discussion

Ms. Maggio explained that there had been many meetings recently, including the ARPA Coordinator and Chris Campi, regarding the funding to which Brookline is entitled; 50% of the state money expected, the rest next August; that cities can use the funds for public health, economic impacts, public sector replacement, premium pay for workers, infrastructure; that unspent funds must be returned or donated to other agencies such as hospitals or schools, improving living conditions.

A meeting was announced on Municipal Budgeting and Finance November 15, 9:30 to 12:15 p.m., on best practices and an ARPA update. Mr. Noga will attend. Expense covered under training.

Ms. Maggio noted that members should be thinking of wish lists and ways to achieve them.

There was discussion; Mr. Noga noted the non-specificity of guidelines, the government urging that municipalities wait for details; work-arounds; the importance of citizen feedback. Mr. Tanza suggested inviting Mr. Kavet to discuss the state economy. Mr. Mello discussed conversations with officials indicating 2024 to earmark, 2026 to spend. Mr. Jones suggested that the town could calculate loss of revenue as a municipality based on the treasurer's advice, projected growth between current FY and last FY and determine lost revenue, and that could be used in any way the town chooses; and suggested consultation with WRC. Mr. Noga cited a formula. Mr. Jones cited a spreadsheet calculator from the state that could determine lost revenue. It was noted that Brookline was entitled to \$55,484.51; that half this amount was received; that the total would be \$102,953.61 with 50% due in thirty days; total would be \$158,438.12.

Historical Society / Round School House

Ms. Maggio noted 3 letters sent in July and August to the historical committee, without a response except from Ms. Nau; that she had met with Ms. Nau.

Following the purchase policy for Bids

It was noted that for amounts over a thousand dollars, RFP must be advertised for 2 or 3 proposals.

Community Support for Historical Buildings in town 3 – Discussion on revising current committee(s)

Ms. Maggio, noted that Brookline supports its historic buildings, citing donations to the BMH committee; and a concern for revising the structure of the committee; that before 2014 there was only the RSH, grant funds in 2006, just completed a \$5,000 grant from five years ago; that Mr. Dutton had emailed declining with regret; that the committee had been asked to respond, and no answers had been forthcoming; and suggested discussing the two buildings and how to manage them.

Mr. Mello discussed a previous BMH vote to keep two separate committees; that because of existing grants, it had seemed inappropriate to combine the two committees; that it was possible that two committees would have to compete for funds. There was discussion of the history of the committees. Mr. Jones discussed membership, favoring combining committees, noting that this did not solve the problem of not enough people involved. Mr. Tanza discussed the purchase policy and the pressure to spend the \$5,000.00 grant; that the board had done well with a tough call. Ms. Maggio noted that the funding of each committee was based on separate buildings.

There was discussion of changing name of the historical society to the RSH committee; then writing to those who had been active and looking to create one committee. Mr. Towler was asked about this, and concurred that the historical society was inappropriately named; and noted as a BMH committee member, not knowing the historical society's view, that two nationally recognized landmarks needed to be maintained; that it was logical for one committee to oversee both buildings; that it was a discussion worth having.

Ms. Maggio noted that the next meeting was September 14, and would ask the RSH committee if this could be on the **October 6 Agenda**, to combine or rename the historic building committees.

Mr. Jones suggested researching anything else in the purview of the historical society, other than the RSH.

It was noted that the BMH open house would be held the first Saturday each month, and suggested asking that they allow the RSH to be open also, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and invite BMH visitors to see the RSH. There was consensus in favor.

Mr. Mello noted that there was a problem with the steps that should be clearly marked. Mr. Noga noted a loose stone step and noncompliance with 3-step handrail rule. Ms. Maggio suggested combining the day, and noted that Ms. Nau had offered to sit in the room, and providing photos of all the work done.

Mr. Bills will fix the step and install a temporary railing. Ms. Maggio will invite Ms. Nau.

Round School House Repair list

The selectboard discussed particulars. Ms. Maggio discussed the need for professional repair, and research on historical significance. There was discussion of gardening, possibilities for community engagement.

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Ms. Maggio will edit the list pursuant to discussions.

Full Time (1560 hrs/year) Road Supervisor Job Description discussion

Ms. Maggio explained that on September 1, Brookline would have a full-time employee for the first time; that there was a need for job description; that research on other towns suggested a particular paragraph from VLCT; and asked the members how this should be done. There was discussion; that the description was for the position, not the person; and not necessarily a full-time position, not a forty hour week; suggested for **next agenda**

Old Business

Reports

Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza

Board of Civil Authority meeting September 8 2021 6:30pm town hall

Mr. Tanza explained the upcoming absentee ballot election, that the voter checklist must be in order, and any challenges must be marked; that there had been many conveyances; a marriage certificate; that Ms. Tanza was pursuing the land records updates.

Dog Licenses

It was noted that several dogs had passed away.

Generator Hook up

It was noted that generator installation was needed. Mr. Bills will look for vendors for a secondary panel for the generator hookup. Ms. Maggio will compose a letter for that purpose, for the **next agenda**.

Selectboard Chair Report – Dot Maggio

Lister Training Links – discussion about positions

Ms. Maggio reported discussion with Ms. Holt, working for the town getting paperwork up to date; had sent links on documentation, etc. for people interested in the position; mentioned three potential appointees and will contact all three, send them links to videos, follow up.

There was discussion of training and compensation. Mr. Jones noted that all three listers will be up for election at Town Meeting, and that candidates must be town residents.

Planning Commission – Daniel Dobson resignation

Ms. Maggio explained that Mr. Dobson was moving to Brattleboro and the Chair would like to extend the selectboard's regrets; and will email and post on the listsrv for anyone interested in the position.

Treasurer – Michael Masters request for replacement

Ms. Maggio will ask if Mr. Masters would continue until march if needed, and noted that Ms. Zwick would be unavailable for at least three weeks; that a budget summary for the past FY was needed. There was discussion, to be continued on the **next agenda**.

Rescue Meeting on September 16, 2021 in Brattleboro @ 6:30pm (discussed above)

Ms. Maggio will attend; discussed particulars; and will send links to those interested.

Virtual Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference Sept 14, 15, 16 (discussed above)

Ms. Maggio will attend; discussed particulars; will send links to those interested.

Handicap parking signs (2) w/ posts and line sprayer

Ms. Maggio noted that this required 2 signs and 2 posts, a 12 x 18-inch sign; that plastic is acceptable; a cost of about \$16.00; and had discussed 200 ft of 4-inch striping. Mr. Bills will order materials.

Update on Mr. & Mrs. Tattersall's flood mitigation concerns (discussed above)

Building Commissioner Report – Bruce Mello

Mr. Mello will be away the first week in September; and discussed starting BMH wish list for 5 years out; addressing some issues in October (ceiling, mice, gutter) with Mr. Bills.

Day Care Building

Mr. Mello discussed working on SLP budget, a deficit of \$485.00 for state mandated water tests; lease coming up; researching service contracts for propane; and noted that everything was complete at SLP; that there was about \$3,900.00 in the account as of September 1.

Salt – Sand Shed Report – David Jones

Mr. Jones reported meeting with Margo Ghia (WRC) and Chris Hunt (Vtrans); that the final set of plans from Ron Bell are now with VTRANS for the final review; that the revised estimate of construction costs for the projects was about 30% higher than expected a few years ago; that the federal grant money isn't going to change for this project; that the shed would cost about \$100,000.00 more than had been envisioned; and discussed options for the salt shed; that Ms. Ghia was managing some other similar projects (all with Ron Bell), and the other towns are in similar circumstances; that Brookline will apply for the municipal mitigation grant offered by the state, and another transportation alternative grant with a deadline in November, applying for both since their timelines overlap, to get the remaining funds needed; that the original vision was for about \$50,000.00; that if funding is available, RFP should be published in January; that the process should not begin until funding is

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assured; that applications are to be done by October 1.

There was discussion of ARPA exemptions; a slow process; costs remaining as expected, but construction costs 35% higher; the grant not extended, but the state will extend the deadline automatically with many towns in this situation.

Highways and Roads Report – E. Mark Bills

Purchasing equipment for the Town of Brookline

Wheeled Excavator

Ms. Maggio noted the original (2019) proposal. Mr. Bills noted that there was still time to research available machines, finances; the town currently renting equipment; that this year's needs would be met next summer; looking at options, seeking everyone's input. There was discussion; that a committee had been formed to see what equipment was needed, what the options were; that this was a process distinct from the question of going before the voters or not. Ms. Maggio noted upcoming finance trainings. Mr. Tanza discussed approaches to financing; that Mr. Bills had been asked to assess equipment based on need. Mr. Mello urged timely action. Mr. Tanza offered support with online research. Noted for **next agenda**.

Other necessary equipment

Storm Damage Update

Dirt Roads

Paved Roads

ARPA Funding for Culverts

Discussion about applying for ARPA funds

Developing a plan

Rented Excavator

work completed

work planned

Ms. Maggio noted that ARPA may cover culvert work, that an assessment should be made and WRC consulted, to come up with a priority list. Mr. Bills discussed a culvert inventory map; plans to change out at least five culverts a year, some requiring 2 or 2-1/3 or more sections; purchasing 15 culverts a year; that a failed culvert on Putney Mountain should be addressed in a couple weeks, possibly covered by a Better Back Roads grant.

Mr. Bills reported discussions with Carr Tree, that the last date for removal was canceled (rain); the next date would be a September 7 tree removal; and noted that:

- the rented wheeled excavator had arrived Tuesday, spent a day on Whitney Hill Road on culverts, etc.;
- becoming familiarized with a new machine (21 hours, air conditioned);
- that the ditch bucket had an improved function allowing backwards digging; t
- hat it facilitates many small jobs repairing and cleaning ditches;
- repaired a charging issue with the grader and re-scraped Athens and Ellen Ware Roads (flood damage), using the wheeled excavator there as well;
- that the Parker Road project (a grant) had waited for GMP to move poles and cut trees for power lines, allowing substantial ditch work, stone lining, culverts;
- that in order to complete the three segments of a grant (final issue for finish) the road will be crowned, and the grant should be completed by next week;
- that work on a failed culvert by Mr. Dobson's would involve raising it 18 inches at the top of Whitney Hill where it levels off, and every year the ditch erodes into the travel lane;
- that working with GMP, they removed all the trees, and now can widen the road, create a new ditch and stone-line it, extend one culvert, allowing better traffic flow, plowing, etc.;
- that tree removal on Hill Road also makes for better drainage;
- those stumps will be removed and the bank regraded a little further from the road edge. Mr. Bills noted that these projects could be done more efficiently with a wheeled excavator.

Mr. Bills reported meeting Mr. Swing on Putney Mountain Road about the future of Bennett Road, washed out completely by the flood; that this could be repaired but needs drainage; that the town had an agreement with the elder Swing under which Swing purchased materials and the town did the maintenance; that there was not much time for this project, and Mr. Swing was invited to discuss the matter with the selectboard; that there was no funding for class 4 roads, and the town was finishing up flood damage, trying to accomplish the grading; that the grant on Putney Mountain was nearly complete for surface gravel; that Mr. Clark had been consulted, awaiting signature.

Communications

Email

- Somara Zwick – Passing of her father & Treasury information
- Daniel Dobson – Letter of resignation from Planning Commission
- Knowledge site learning webinar offerings
- VLCT Webinars

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Regular Mail

- appropriations, Wind Co Humane Soc thank you
- Vt assoc for the blind thank you
- grace cottage thank you
- sevca thank you
- VLCT about town fair, annual bus mtg sep 29 1pm

Pay Orders

Payroll warrant #2022-10 September 1, 2021, \$6483.86

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll warrant #2022-10 dated September 1, 2021, in the amount of \$6483.86. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

Accounts Payable warrant #2022-11 September 1, 2021, \$ _____

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable warrant #2022-11 dated September 1, 2021, in the amount of \$24,966.81. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

Set Agenda for the next meeting – September 15, 2021

- Historical Society
- Wheeled excavator
- Combining historical committees – discussion
- Generator installation
- Treasurer – Michael Masters request for replacement
- Road Supervisor Job Description – discussion

Adjourn the meeting

Ms. Maggio moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.
The meeting was Adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, September 10, 2021