

TOWN OF BROOKLINE SELECTBOARD MEETING
Wednesday, July 18th, 2018 at 6:30 PM
Draft Minutes

Present:

Selectboard: Dot Maggio (Chair), David Jones, Gwen Tanza, Chris Webb, Bruce Mello

Members of the Public: Cynthia Nau, Mark Bills, Guy Tanza (Videographer), Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM.

Review changes to the agenda if any

Added minutes from June 27 emergency meeting and July 13 emergency meeting.

Added Cynthia Nau as scheduled member of the public.

Added Windham County Humane Society contract that was approved in March, for signature.

Highways and roads, tree removal.

Added homestead rebate under New business

Moved SLDC after Highways & Roads

Approve minutes from June 20, 2018

Mr. Jones moved to approve the June 20th, 2018 minutes. Second by Ms. Maggio. **All in Favor.**

Mr. Webb moved to approve the minutes from June 27th, 2018 emergency meeting as amended. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in Favor.**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes from the July 13th, 2018 emergency meeting in which the A/P warrant 2019-1 was approved. Second by Mr. Mello. **Two abstaining, the motion passed.**

Scheduled members of the public

Ms. Nau and daughter Ms. Martucci were introduced. Ms. Nau explained that they have been endangered by traffic coming down the hill in front of her residence; there have been near misses; there is insufficient signage; they are also concerned that the school buses from West River Transportation face a similar hazard. Ms. Nau requested signs warning of the blind driveway.

There was discussion; Mr. Bills explained plans to grade the road above when paving from the intersection to Howard's barn, by grinding the pavement and removing about three feet of the hill for about one hundred feet (to be determined); removing the crest of the hill will open sight-lines. Meanwhile with the Selectboard's approval he will obtain new reflective signs for both directions. The paving project will not start until next year.

Ms. Maggio moved that two signs be approved for safety concerns at Ms. Nau's residence. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Unscheduled members of the public

Old Business

Cash Flow discussion

Ms. Maggio noted that Ms. Zwick had reported a budget surplus; she will be printing out the End-of-Year Report on her return from vacation. Tax bills have been sent out.

Review past winter service bids for sanding / salt / plowing. Discuss change and contract development to be updated so that the RFP can be placed in the paper in August for awarding in September.

Ms. Maggio explained that last year Mr. Clark had plowed without a signed contract; Ms. Zwick had provided a contract and Ms. Maggio will have it ready for Aug 1st, for approval and posting. She suggested

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discussion of using a two-year contract on the next agenda.

Beck Engineering billing compromise

Ms. Maggio explained that the State requires a special report; they should have instructed the Town to try to start the UV system at SLDC, before requiring a new system; Beck Engineering reported that the mistake was found and the bill was too high and they will cut back the bill two hours at \$168.00 per hour. The balance is \$1,602.05; \$2,100.00 had been paid.

Animal Control Officer

Report re: dog licensing

Only eight dogs not registered, form sent out by Mr. Tanza, some calls made, some compliance; on August 1 she will ask that municipal tickets be issued and court proceedings initiated.

Humane Society Contract

The Humane Society Contract for 2019-19 had been approved at Town Meeting and was signed.

Highways and Roads

Current Projects

Mr. Bills discussed current work. Mowing was completed, a little over the expected 80 hours; the equipment vendor had called and said the tractor would not be needed for a few extra days and they would charge \$75/hr for further use; he accomplished the extra mowing.

Mr. Maggio noted that the results are very good; Mr. Mello noted comments that the drainage and paving looks very good.

Mr. Bills discussed Ellen Ware Road, a one-lane bypass, he had left some traffic-calming features, will deposit some gravel in a few places; he noted that it would see heavy use in an emergency.

Ms. Maggio noted a partially-fallen tree on the river side that poses a hazard; Mr. Bills plans to remove it.

It was noted that the speed signs are due and should be installed before the next meeting.

The recent storm did not do much damage, some deadfall, some erosion; an ash tree on Putney Mountain was leaning on a maple. Ms. Maggio explained that the Mayotee Tree Service was working nearby, and the neighbors had agreed with them to clear the road if they would remove the tree, leaving the wood on the ground. They did the work on a handshake while Ms. Maggio flagged traffic. The work was done in an hour for \$600.00. Only one car was delayed on the road.

Ms. Maggio will send Mayotee Tree Service the Vendor Package; the company had been a vendor previously.

Upcoming Projects

Listed were speed limit signs, dead tree on Ellen Ware, gravel on order to go on the second half of Ellen Ware Road.

Ms. Maggio had called about paving equipment left standing for three weeks; the company had forgotten it, and picked it up immediately when notified.

Mr. Bills discussed plans to replace five or six culverts, a few places in town to improve roads, erosion control, sight lines, drainage on Whitney Hill; prioritizing safety issues; near the top of Whitney Hill where the power company removed trees, some stumps and material along the ditch will be removed to improve the drainage; one culvert will be extended to widen the road; it would not qualify for an erosion grant, but for years it has been roughed up by heavy rains; some ledge at the edge leaves no room for a ditch. This is not a very expensive project and has been on the list for some time; the tree removal was a major

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improvement. This should not exceed the budget or purchase policy.

There was discussion of a fallen tree in the Grassy Brook Road right-of-way that might interfere with plowing, Mr. Bills will cut it back; he noted that there are some others on Hill Road at second homes that the owners are probably not aware of; some he has pushed back.

He noted that the previous salt vendor did not deliver promptly. Mr. Bills suggested using a different salt company. There was discussion about sources and invasive wild parsnip said to be arriving in salt from Chile; he estimated that this year there was a reduction in parsnip by about half, attributable to mowing before it seeds. American Salt co has their own mine in NY so their product may not be contaminated with parsnip.

Mr. Bills suggested that delivery deadlines and pre-purchase samples be specified for sand delivery. There was discussion of replenishment times, the quality of the sand, that darker sand helps ice melt faster, coarseness helps traction. Other towns have reported that finer sand blows away quickly.

Mr. Bills will order the traffic signs for Ms. Nau's driveway; there was discussion of the best blind drive sign locations. Ms. Maggio noted that the traffic ordinance is past sixty days and is in effect; notification will be sent out; sign changes will be made, a resident's illegal sign will be removed. There was discussion of the stop sign at Putney Road, drivers not stopping, possibly a visibility issue coming down from Putney Mountain. The maps show that a "Stop Ahead" sign had been near that intersection previously.

Ms. Maggio suggested that preliminary budget discussions would be coming soon.

Mr. Bills noted that most mowing having been completed, the next mowing should be easier; he will make reservations for machinery next year; the bill had been about \$3,000.00 a week; one more year of two mowings will get ahead of the worst weeds; he will reserve an extra set of blades, not an additional charge.

Ms. Maggio moved to have mowing equipment on order for mid June 2019 including a second set of blades. Second by Mr. Webb. **All in Favor.**

WRC meeting from July 2

Mr. Bills met on July 2 with Emily Davis (WRC) about the Erosion Grant; completed the first round for last year's season; made a couple of new site visits to locations mapped for the town by WRC; these will be monitored; photographs were taken by WRC; repairs will be deeper ditches with heavy stone lining. Visited sites from last year as well as those to be approved for this year. Ms. Zwick will assist with Ms. Davis.

New Business

Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza noted that primary season is beginning, and absentee ballots for the August 14th Vermont Primary are available; the Warning and information are on the website; voters can register the same day they vote; three ballots must be sent out, Democrat, Republican and Progressive, and only one may be used.

Homestead email

Mr. Tanza explained that if a resident of Vermont must file a Homestead Declaration and Abatement is wanted, the Abatement for Taxes form must be filed. He noted that the State is in arrears in returning rebates, etc. If no data is received residents should make the payments as shown on their bill; the State has announced by email that this problem should be resolved by July 27th. He discussed the penalty for filing a Homestead Declaration after April 15th, when the town can assess 8% penalty based on the Listers asking the Selectboard for approval.

Ms. Maggio discussed an improperly recorded Tax Abatement from last year; the Selectboard had approved \$2,500.00 reserved for abatement; about \$2,000.00 must be spent because of this error. There was discussion; it is a change to the Grand List; not much change to the tax rate; the Abatement was made.

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Mr. Tanza reported that the Town is in good shape regarding CLA; there are funds set aside for reappraisal if needed. There was discussion.

SLDC repairs/cost estimate (Mr. Mello)

Mr. Mello reviewed SLDC work noting that last year was level-funded; the Town bought SLDC; he discussed the budget from May, now about \$2,600.00. He discussed the building structure and floor plan; emergency repair to a backed up toilet last week, anticipating a bill for about two hours' work; original building has three inch cast iron drains, the new wing is all plastic; the recurring problem was in the old building.

Mr. Bovat had been asked to fix certain problems with the drains, probably \$400.00 to \$500.00 damage. He discussed correcting problems so they don't recur; the two toilets in the office and another room taking five minutes to fill; work is to be done by Mr. Bovat.

For discussion Mr. Mello provided lists of projects.

Three people had responded to a Front Page Forum solicitation for volunteer carpentry help; two non-insured carpenters; Ms. Maggio had obtained signatures and completed paperwork with one insured carpenter.

There was discussion of three sinks in three rooms that are moldy, have holes; he provided a sample of something growing out of the back of a sink; a man offers to work for \$15.00 per hour to fix the Formica, remove sinks, replace plywood, add laminate and replace backsplashes, to be done next week.

Mr. Mello discussed the list of projects; dealing with rot by scraping and sanding; around the entrance way it is not as bad as anticipated. New crown molding has been ordered. Most of the window trim just needs scraping and painting.

There was discussion of scheduling, coordinating volunteers. Mr. Mello discussed work to be done as to priorities and details, maintenance and repairs. He invited questions.

The previous punch-list has been completed. There was discussion of the grease-hood, noting that only the microwave oven is thought to be in use. There was discussion of the railings and decks, and signage for the playground.

Mr. Bills will obtain a "Play At Own Risk" sign. Mr. Mello will finalize employee hours, etc.

Ms. Maggio noted that a bill for plumbing is anticipated. Mr. Mello will keep the Selectboard updated on progress.

Communications

There was discussion of a letter of complaint about flowers removed from around a sign. Ms. Maggio will follow up.

Regular Mail

- Letter complaining about flowers removed from a sign rec'd July 14.
- Vermont Local Roads rec'd Jun 21
- Windham County Humane Society (contract) rec'd July 10
- Beck Engineering PC rec'd July 12
- Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation rec'd July 12
- Youth Services rec'd July 3
- VT Emergency Management District (Preparedness Conference)
- VLTC periodical
- VTRANS training center (course offerings)

Email

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- Vermont Department of Taxes (homestead email) rec'd July 5

other

There was discussion of recycle bins, filled up in four days last week.

Pay Orders

Ms. Maggio asked Mr. Bills to correct a payroll document, which was done.

Payroll

Ms. Maggio had previously approved Payroll Order #2019-02, dated July 11, 2018, in the amount of \$3,855.16.

Accounts Payable

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2019-03, dated July 18, in the amount of \$7,445.63. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Set agenda for the meeting on Wednesday August 1, 2018

- Review two-year plowing contract – discussion
- SLDC Update
- Recycling site signage discussion

Adjournment

Mr. Mello moved to Adjourn. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in Favor.**

The meeting Adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, July 19th, 2018