

**Draft Minutes**  
**Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting**  
**Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 6:30p.m.**  
(videoconference)

**Attending**

*Selectboard:*

Dot Maggio (Chair)  
David Jones  
Gwen Tanza  
Bruce Mello  
Stan Noga

*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 6:32p.m.

**Review changes to agenda if any**

Scheduled member of the public Mike Masters was unavailable.

**Approve minutes from the May 5, 2021 selectboard meeting.**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for May 5, 2021 as amended. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

**Scheduled members of the public**

**Mike Masters Treasurer re: end of year preparations** (tabled)

**Unscheduled members of the public** (none)

**New Business**

**Disturbing the peace – Noise complaint**

Mr. Noga discussed excessive engine noise from near Papoose Lane; extremely loud, citing three occasions, two evening and one mid-afternoon; there was discussion; that a noise ordinance would not be feasible; that a personal request should be made before legal action is considered; that law enforcement would be a last resort.

Ms. Maggio will email residents inviting communication with the Selectboard in the event of complaints.

**Request for minor road repair near guardrail by Roger's property Hill Rd.**

Mr. Noga noted a culvert on the north side of Hill Road with some erosion under the pavement. Ms. Maggio will communicate with Mr. Bills and Mr. Clark, with photographs.

**Town Shed – theft of road material/rock/gravel**

Ms. Maggio reported that people had been seen removing materials, and one apology was received in response to emails; a sign was placed; and suggested placing a lock on the gate and security for the new sand & salt shed be considered in planning.

**Budget 2020-2021 end of year discussion**

Ms. Maggio discussed conversations with the town financial officials, and the setting of the Tax Rate; an end-of-year summary by videoconference on the June agenda; and a previous suggestion of having monthly financial reports. Mr. Jones noted that the situation was improved over the past few years. Ms. Maggio will request that Mr. Masters provide reports by email so that members will be able to ask pertinent questions on June 16. Mr. Jones noted that reports should be mutually understood by both the treasurer and the selectboard. Ms. Maggio acknowledged the support of all concerned.

**Old Business**

**Recycle Bin ownership paperwork – transfer to Brookline from WSWMD**

Ms. Maggio discussed the original 2017 MOU for the recycle bins, terminated in March 2021; and provided a bill of sale for the bins.

Ms. Maggio moved that the chair be authorized to sign a Bill of Sale making Brookline the owner of the recycle bins. Second by Mr. Jones.

In discussion, it was noted that the price was one dollar; that this supports the validity of the agreement under statute.

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

It was noted that the bins will remain under the control of Triple-T, that they were valued at a rate of "\$0.08 per \$100 of value" for insurance purposes; that liability would be covered separately; that the bins have negligible intrinsic value; that the bins would be stored in Brattleboro, moved by Triple-T as part of a supply of bins, such that any bin in use might not be one of the actual bins sold to the town.

Ms. Maggio will sign the document.

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**DVFiber – continued discussion on whether Brookline should join the Deerfield Valley Communications Union District for broadband at this time. Discuss and vote.**

Mr. Noga provided details on the DVFiber offering, suggesting that the number of households without broadband service is relatively small, and that the benefit to surrounding areas of Brookline's membership in a local CUD would not be significant; and offered to answer questions.

Mr. Jones concurred, although noting that there would be outside funding for the program such that despite the very small number of people without access, it would improve the town's public face; that if someone was willing to represent the town, it should be approved.

Mr. Noga noted that according to Dr. John (DVCUD), a fee for service had not been defined but was expected to be \$60 to \$100, depending on whether the service was fiber-optic or not; that any advantage to the town was not clear; and that he would represent the town if the vote were in favor.

Mr. Tanza cited a Comcast \$39 internet service program for low-income families; that Brookline coverage was extensive, available to anyone in the town.

Mr. Jones suggested that low-cost service would reflect the price; that fiber-optic was a superior product that would provide more and better options; and other than the time commitment for the representative, there would be no cost to this program.

It was confirmed that Comcast did not provide fiber-optic service. Mr. Mello discussed the need for a representative. Ms. Maggio suggested that Covid-19 funds might be available. Ms. Tanza expressed concern for the time commitment demanded of a representative. Mr. Jones could not commit to the position, but would serve as Mr. Noga's assistant as needed.

It was noted that both a designated primary representative and an alternate were required; that there were two programs through the state, so that if an individual did not have cable, they could obtain a credit to be connected through an existing line to their households; and it would be good if residents had an opportunity to express their desires before five selectboard members made the decision.

Mr. Jones raised the question of whether the program should be approved without consulting residents, since members were elected to discern the best course of action. Mr. Noga noted that most of a selectboard's actions do not require a public vote.

Mr. Jones noted that the offering would rely on two individuals' uncompensated time; and offered to take the lead as representative. Mr. Noga offered in that case to be Mr. Jones' assistant representative to the CUD.

Ms. Tanza suggested that the selectboard has been elected to make such decisions on behalf of the town.

Ms. Maggio moved to sign the resolution appointing Jones rep and Noga alternate to the DVFiber CUD. Second by Mr. Jones.

In discussion, it was noted that meeting schedules would include quarterly and monthly meetings (16 per year), and there would be committees such as finance, RFP, etc.

By roll call vote, Mr. Jones, aye; Ms. Tanza, aye; Mr. Noga, aye; Mr. Mello, no; the Chair voted no. **The motion passed.**

Ms. Maggio will complete the paperwork.

Mr. Noga noted that the town may withdraw from the CUD at any time.

**WiFi HotSpot at Town Hall – Donated by Project Connect Approval.**

Frequently asked questions: <https://go.itdrc.org/projectconnect-faq>

Photos: <https://go.itdrc.org/projectconnect-photos>

Flyer: <https://go.itdrc.org/projectconnect-flyer>

Media kit: <https://go.itdrc.org/projectconnect-media-kit>

**Our application has been approved – Ready to install this month! Includes equipment and installation with an access data speed control of 5 MB upload and 25 MB download. Town Data will be protected from public access. Discuss and vote.**

There was discussion. Ms. Maggio reported that the project coordinator had called, ready to begin installation. Concerns had been raised about signal strength (restricted as to upload and download speeds). Mr. Tanza noted that no action was necessary before full deliberations had been completed.

Ms. Maggio moved that the matter be tabled until June 2, pending further information. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

**Summary / Update / Reports**

**Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza**

Mr. Tanza reported about 75 dog licenses, record searches at \$1 per page, \$15 per recorded page; regarding delinquent taxes suggested extending the deadline another ten days before imposing the 8% penalty, the deadline was May 18, the penalty will be in effect May 28.

**Selectboard Chair Report – Dot Maggio**

**ACO – Dog**

Ms. Maggio reported one resident dog picked up by a passer-by who thought it was lost.

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**Town Shed Gate**

Ms. Maggio discussed the gate and signs, and suggested a combination lock be installed to keep the area more secure.

**Building Commissioner Report – Bruce Mello**

**Daycare building**

Mr. Mello discussed focus on the round schoolhouse at next meeting; planning to attend the church committee meeting and suggest a five year plan.

Mr. Mello noted a workman's compensation form at the office and will inform Mr. Bovat.

There was discussion of the water system inspection schedule. Mr. Noga discussed the worst-case scenario of inspections five months apart and an adverse event with school children, and suggested that Ms. Burke should be approached respectfully about spacing inspections more regularly. Mr. Jones concurred that a request could be made, noting that Ms. Burke was hired because the state required regular inspections. Ms. Tanza concurred. Mr. Tanza was recognized and noted that there had been monthly tests for a time before it was made quarterly, and that the inspections involve rigorous sampling for laboratory tests. Mr. Mello noted that the previous schedule had been implemented because the system had failed the tests.

Mr. Mello will call Ms. Burke.

Mr. Mello noted that the UV system was also checked regularly and had been working well, and of the two UV water purifiers in place, the one running will be shut down, and the other turned on at the end of June.

**Town Hall Pest Removal**

There was discussion; that no action had been taken to date; that this will have to be deferred for a week; that the building should be sealed against rodents for two weeks prior to any abatement work; and that Mr. Mello will make an assessment with Mr. Bills and Mr. Noga for the **next Agenda**.

Mr. Mello noted minor animal activity at the dumpster.

Mr. Noga expressed concern about entering the attic, noting that the CDC recommends specific protective gear and clothing when animal droppings are suspected; and with regard to the incidence of disease associated with mouse droppings, this was of concern if raising dust. Mr. Mello offered to reconnoiter the attic. Mr. Noga and Mr. Bills confirmed the plan to schedule a meeting at the site.

**Highways & Roads**

**Supervisor Report – E. Mark Bills**

**Repairs and projects planned**

There was discussion of culvert erosion (described above); Mr. Bills had been aware of the problem and planned to make repairs; and noted other locations in need of similar attention.

Mr. Bills reported more inch-and-a-half gravel applied over previous crushed stone, now that roads are drier; storm damage, roadside mowing, ongoing general maintenance; and two culverts needing work on Parker Road, one involving a grant. Mr. Jones asked a bout a GMP project. Mr. Bills noted a section of poles to be replaced with no activity to date.

Mr. Jones will ask for an extension on the grant work involved in case GMP does not complete their project this year.

**Security**

Mr. Bills will install a combination lock on the gate, noting that it would be unlocked occasionally for deliveries and during operations such as plowing.

**Budget**

Ms. Maggio suggested members forward any paperwork to the treasurer.

**Communications**

**Email**

- Information Technology Disaster Resource Center/WiFi Hotspot

**Regular Mail**

**Census Pay Orders**

**Payroll Warrant #2021-19 \$2,088.00 dated May 12, 2021**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2021-19, dated May 12, 2021, in the amount of \$2,088.00. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

**Accounts Payable Warrant #2021-20 \$11,495.00 dated May 19, 2021**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2021-20, dated May 19, 2021, in the amount of \$11,495.00. Second by Mr. Mello.

After discussion, **All in favor.**

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**Set Agenda for next meeting. Wednesday June 2, 2021**

- Historical Society – Round School House Grant – J. Dutton/ D. Wellman B.
- Town offices pest control
- WiFi hotspot
- End-of-year budget summary

Regarding the round schoolhouse grant, Mr. Noga asked about approval, possible RFP requirements, cover letter, scope of work; and with an August expenditure deadline when materials were not expected until June, whether it would be possible to complete the work in 45 days. Ms. Maggio noted that this would have to be decided at the next meeting if the project was to go forward. Mr. Noga offered to do further research.

Mr. Noga asked about the pest control project, whether any action should be taken in the interval, in light of offers from vendors and the spending policy. It was decided that other than no-fee estimates, the matter will be addressed at the next meeting.

Ms. Maggio will be available should a vendor site visit be needed.

Mr. Tanza asked that anyone with financial work to be done should address this in a timely manner.

**Adjourn Meeting**

Ms. Maggio moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, May 21, 2021*