

**Draft Minutes**  
**Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 7, 2021, 6:30p.m.**  
(videoconference)

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

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

*Members of the Public:*  
Peter Barus (Recording Clerk)

**Call the meeting to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:44 p.m.

**Review changes to agenda if any**

Mr. Mello asked that the board discuss under new business:

- protection from ransomware;
- wheeled excavator.

**Review/approve minutes from the June 16, 2021 selectboard meeting.**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the June 16, 2021 selectboard minutes as amended. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

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

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

**New Business**

**Treasurer's report for the fiscal year 2020-2021**

The Treasurer not present, balance sheet dated June 30, 2021 received, the Treasurer's Report Tabled.

***Selectboard recommendations for changes in Budget Reports***

Emailed, also Tabled until Treasurer available.

***List of approved vendors - annual review and approval for FY 2021-22***

Ms. Maggio noted that regular vendors should be approved at the first meeting of the new Fiscal Year, and read aloud from the current list.

There was discussion, that this had not been addressed in five years; that the list be circulated before approval; that the purchase policy required annual approval; that the names were from Accounts Payable; that the list began in 2012 or '13 when the purchase policy from VLCT was adopted. Ms. Maggio noted that the listed vendors will be used during the coming year, and that the contract and liability paperwork on file will be kept up to date.

Mr. Jones moved to approve the Preferred Vendors List as circulated by Ms. Maggio on July 6, 2021. Second by Mr. Noga.

In discussion it was noted that the Treasurers will be requested to check the list and associated paperwork; and that the list is a living document subject to change.

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

***Set the Tax Rate for 2021-2022. Discussion and vote***

***Homestead Tax Rate – 1.8093***

***Non Homestead Tax Rate – 1.6048***

It was noted that as calculated by the treasurers, the municipal tax rate is 0.4048

Ms. Maggio moved to set the annual tax rate for the town of brookline at 0.4048. Sec0nd by Mr. Mello. **All in favor.**

**Stray Hold Contract from Windham County Humane Society 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022 Contract flat fee \$350.00 as impoundment facility for the town to satisfy 20 VSA 3381. Contract approval / signature needed**

Ms. Maggio moved that the Stray Hold Contract from Windham County Humane Society for the flat fee of \$350.00 be accepted as presented. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in favor.**

**Maintenance cleaning of town hall building – Discussion**

Mr. Mello had requested this item and noted that the cleaning had been discussed three weeks ago, and proposed that it be done on a regular basis, noting that in the past this had fallen to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk. There was discussion; of weather impacts on the need for cleaning, frequency, scope of work, and cost of \$40.00 per hour.

Ms. Maggio will discuss with the vendor and present for a vote for the **Next Agenda.**

**America Rescue Plan Act – Resolution to accept funds.**

Ms. Maggio explained the matter, requiring motions and votes per agenda.

***Motion that the town of Brookline accept its allocation of coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding (CLFRF) from the US Treasury, along with the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements that are requirements of accepting these funds.***

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Ms. Maggio so moved. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in favor.**

***Motion to name and appoint a person to serve as the Town of Brookline’s “Authorized Representative” as required by the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding (CLFRF) from the US Treasury, to sign the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements by July 15, 2021. An Authorized Representative is an individual with legal authority to bind the government entity. An Authorized Representative must sign the Acceptance of Award terms for it to be valid.***

Ms. Maggio so moved, recommending Dorothy Maggio be appointed as Authorized Representative. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in favor.**

***Motion to name someone to be the “Contact Person” for the Town of Brookline’s CLFRF Award from the US Treasury.***

***“Contact Person” should be the person who will perform the administrative tasks associated with the ARPA/CLFRF funding, such as tracking and managing the terms and conditions, compliance, reporting, etc. on behalf of the municipality.***

Ms. Maggio so moved, recommending the Treasurer, Michael Masters, be appointed Contact Person. Second by Mr. Mello.

There discussion of the Treasurer’s job description, noting that the task could be delegated to an assistant.

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

Ms. Maggio noted that the requirements for acceptance of the funds had been voted in a public meeting, and the Chair will so inform the U.S. Treasury Dept.

**Disability Rights Vermont polling place accessibility survey report for Town Hall  
ADA van parking space and signage needed Beveling of the wheelchair ramp into town hall to remove 1.25 in bump**

The two deficiencies had been noted by the investigator from DRV. There was discussion of ADA specifications.

Mr. Bills will obtain specifications from the signage company. Mr. Noga discussed specifications for cars and vans. It was confirmed that meeting just the van specification would be sufficient for compliance. Mr. Bills noted that blacktop painting was locally available. Ms. Maggio asked that the selectboard be updated when the full information was assembled.

**Protection From Ransomware**

Mr. Mello discussed concerns for the town’s critical data. Mr. Tanza explained that NEMRC backs up the system every night; that “Two Wired Guys” is responsible for computer security.

**Wheeled Excavator**

Mr. Mello recalled that the purchase of a wheeled excavator had been approved by the selectboard, and then rejected at Town Meeting; and that there was still a need for the machine; and explained the different uses to which the machine could be put, such as the recent plugged culvert, with no equipment on hand that could address the problem; that each time there is such an issue, a vendor must be called in and the selectboard apprised of the situation; almost on a daily basis there are opportunities for the efficiencies such equipment provides; that the grader is owned and works well for what it is designed to do, but roads require other equipment; and discussed the many accomplishments made possible by rentals in previous years, noting increased demand and concomitant scarcity; that the (successful) program of early mowing to keep ahead of invasive plants had reached a cost \$3,400 for one week, barely enough time to complete the work; that a wheeled excavator with a mowing attachment, had done better work than a rented over-rail tractor; that mowing could continue through the summer when needed, if the vehicle was owned by the town; that convenience makes a difference when there is a plugged culvert or a downed tree, signage installation, equipment to move, to correct issues right away; that with each rain the roads change, that crowning and run-outs must be maintained to prevent dispersal into the right-of-way, a year-round problem with snow melt and rainwater that otherwise damages the roads; that the town owns a chain saw, a pole chain saw, a grader, and road rakes; while neighboring towns of comparable size own several pieces of road equipment.

Mr. Bills reported meeting with Jeff Nugent (WRC) about state standards and available grants; that this year WRC is assessing the needs of all roadways, priority cites and ditches, with a plan to place crushed stone in all ditches in the mapped segments by 2025; that such a wheeled excavator would be very efficient; that the town must bay back 25% of the grants; that the first priority segments include Putney Mountain drainage into the West River; knowing that in the next four years the ditches will need to be brought up to state clean water act standards with crushed stone; that the JCB 110 machine can do all the work, take the stone from the truck and line the ditch in coordination with the truck; that it is a universal emergency road repair vehicle which can pick up a tree, move rocks, do the mowing and most other work needed routinely in Brookline with convenience and efficiency; that the purchase would not overtake the budget, and contractor service (anything needed for the roads) would be greatly reduced over a five-year period; and that with half the contractor service budget going for this equipment funds would be left over for special needs.

There was discussion of whether pandemic recovery funds could be applied; and to continue at future meetings. Mr. Mello discussed the large amount of work done by Mr. Bills and suggested that everything should be done to make the work more efficient. Mr. Jones suggested that the other people on the committee formed after the purchase had been rejected should be included in new discussions.

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**Old Business**

**Round SchoolHouse Grant – work progress update – Stan Noga. Chris Parker and Norm Holden were each notified that they could begin. Review of work completed.**

Ms. Maggio thanked Mr. Mello for his diligence in preparing the building for painting. Mr. Noga noted that Mr. Parker had repaired the west wall and two boards in the SW corner of the shed, and would be submitting his invoice for payment; that the bid had been \$3,000.00 and the work was done as offered.

Mr. Noga discussed many aspects of the work done, and the process by which Mr. Parker would be paid by Vermont Preservation Trust; that he would recommend approval of Mr. Parker's invoice in advance of receipt of hard copy; and noted that plastic had been applied to protect the window frames and sashes prior to painting; that Mr. Holden had not been informed, and would be asked for a more specific date when painting would start.

Ms. Maggio noted that VPT would be paying Parker directly; Mr. Noga confirmed that the selectboard should approve the work and forward photos and paperwork, with Mr. Parker's contact information, to VPT; and recommend payment, as Mr. Parker had done the work.

There was discussion, noting that VPT must also approve the work.

Mr. Noga moved that the selectboard approve the work on the Round Schoolhouse as being in compliance with the scope of work agreed with contractor Chris Parker. Second by Ms. Maggio.

In discussion Mr. Jones asked if the Historical Society had viewed the work. Mr. Noga noted no contact with the Historical Commission; that Mr. Dutton had viewed the work and expressed satisfaction. Mr. Jones noted that he would vote to approve without having seen the work, having no personal expertise.

Ms. Maggio will notify Holden, Dutton, and others concerned.

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

**Hybrid / Zoom meetings for selectboard Equipment needed discussion**

Ms. Maggio noted the new conference equipment in use for the present meeting; the screen obtained with the grant. Mr. Noga thanked Mr. Tanza for obtaining the grant in service to the town.

**Brookline Ball field fence repair and scoreboard removal/storage Update**

Mr. Noga discussed the entry to the field, the knotweed, etc.; that five different sources for pricing for the posts was in a tight range; and discussed the various materials available. Mr. Jones suggested that Mr. Noga decide on the best solution. Mr. Noga suggested three pressure treated, two-hole posts at \$12.85 each, available at Perkins.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the purchase of three fence posts for the baseball field repairs. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in favor.**

Ms. Maggio discussed the scoreboard removal and storage, noting that more weed removal would be needed; that the scoreboard had fallen down; and invited discussion. Mr. Noga offered to assist Mr. Bills with the weed removal. Mr. Bills will store the scoreboard in the town shed, and noted that the mowing could be done with the wheeled excavator (however acquired). Bills and Noga will coordinate.

**Summary / Update / Reports**

**Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza**

Mr. Tanza reported business as usual, plus a big influx of title searches now that the office is open, face masks an option; that 87 dog licenses were sold, and delinquent taxes down to \$4,400.00.

Mr. Tanza noted that six months ago there was an opportunity for an election grant, to make voting more accessible; that \$5,000.00 had been awarded, allowing the purchase of a window air conditioner, gasoline generator, flat screen TV, and about \$400 expenditure over the grant allotted; but that rodent mitigation had been included, and the town had done well; that the items should be approved; that this brought the town into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, making the town a better place; that the electric hookup for the generator will also incur an expense.

**Selectboard Chair Report – Dot Maggio**

***Newfane – Brookline Newsletter***

Ms. Maggio explained the newsletter, accepting submissions of about 250 words.

***Newfane Animal Control Officer information***

Ms. Maggio noted that Mark Anderson was on a video for the Newfane selectboard, discussing the Windham Sheriff's office hiring an animal control officer to be shared with other towns; a 24/7 dispatch for loose or vicious animals, still requiring a local animal control officer, and that four towns were sharing the officer so far; that this was still a possibility for Brookline.

Ms. Maggio will update the selectboard when more information is available.

***Road Grant Manager for 2021-22 appointment***

Ms. Maggio noted that paperwork had been signed in June, the Letter of Intent sent on time to participate; that Mr. Bills had met and worked with the office on the Putney Mountain work; that \$6,700 had been awarded for that work; and asked Mr. Jones to help with road grants (Mr. Jones confirmed that he will help with the existing grants). There was discussion of the role of a Road Commissioner; that Mr. Jones will see to

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the completion of the paperwork on grants submitted in the past couple of years.

***Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training. Email – Lgoodell@vlct.org for a copy of the video(s) missed June 21, June 28 Next live webinar July 14 3 to 4:30 pm***

Ms. Maggio explained the included email for copies of missed webinars.

Ms. Maggio noted a resident's health issue complaint, and had meet with Mr. Noga, walked the site of an RV with its owner, had spoken with property owner, and found no evidence of any health hazard; and that paperwork will be on file.

**Building Commissioner Report – Bruce Mello**

Mr. Mello informed Mr. Bills that he had obtained culverts.

Mr. Mello discussed the sign and window screens at the Round Schoolhouse. Mr. Jones offered some adjustable screens that might serve as temporary screens, and will drop them at the town office. Mr. Mello suggested repainting the sign with funds left from the grant, noting a deadline of July 7. Mr. Noga suggested starting prior to August 1; noted a signature on the sign, and suggested two other vendors. Mr. Mello will make the calls, and check with the VPT

***Town Hall rodent mitigation Update Insect damage found at Town Hall***

Mr. Mello had been monitoring the situation and noted additional rodents in the building, two in three weeks; had discussed additional sealing with Mr. Noga; and suggested discussing special caulk with the vendor; regarding insect damage, suggested considering professional exterminator. Mr. Noga had circulated photographs to the selectboard, and had inspected the basement for indications, found no apparent insect activity, but possible rodent entry points; had used a photographic scope around the basement, finding no new rodent entry points; had found plastic devices in each corner of the building, one with missing filler; and had found mud tubes in the SW corner of the building, whether active unknown.

Mr. Mello asked that a consultant be called to assess insect and rodent conditions. Mr. Noga suggested informing the vendor of recent findings. Mr. Mello will inform the vendor.

***Day Care Building TBD***

Mr. Mello had communicated with Momaney, switched the water over to the alternate UV system, working well; and noted that the first 25:1 micron filter, supposed to last 25,000 gallons, was difficult to remove; and reported no serious charges this month, perhaps \$150 spent, and a water testing bill, some minor maintenance costs (salt); and estimated funds on hand at about \$15,000 (enough to cover the \$14,500 needed to paint the building).

Mr. Jones asked if there were other expenses on hold, noting that there was barely enough to pay for painting; and suggested that no other expenditures should be contemplated. Mr. Mello concurred, and noted that no major expenses were anticipated; but that there were unfunded mandates from the state for water testing.

Mr. Mello reported that the tenant had asked about installing a mini-split (heat pump) system. Ms. Maggio noted that this should be on a future agenda separately.

Ms. Maggio confirmed that the insect question is also a separate issue. There was discussion of insect infestation inspection; it was suggested that several vendors be called to obtain a free inspection. Mr. Noga will make these calls.

**Highways & Roads Supervisor report – E. Mark Bills**  
***Letter of Intent sent in for Roads Grants In Aid program***

Mr. Bills reported a grant obtained for \$6,700.00.

Mr. Bills discussed erosion control (Clean Water Act); had met with Mr. Nugent (WRC) at the worst site, discussed culvert replacement and stone-lined ditches, and whether culverts larger than 18" diameter required a hydraulic study; had ordered another pallet of cold-patch for potholes, received last week; will ask Mr. Clark about working on the new grant; had touched up a few places with the grader, noting that hard rains will require more.

***Projects Current Projects upcoming TBD***

Mr. Bills asked the selectboard's permission to continue the project from last winter, when 100 trees were marked for removal, that had to be stopped for budget reasons; and a drainage project on Hill Road, now that the new budget is in effect; noting that Carr Tree offered to continue at \$2,500 per day. It was noted that Carr should be on the Preferred Vendor's List. There was discussion.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve one day's work by Carr Tree for \$2,500 to complete the erosion project. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

Mr. Bills noted that Carr would be invoicing in about a month.

**Communications**

**Email**

***Links to recorded Webinars for Diversity training VLCT***  
***Homestead and Non Homestead Tax rates***  
***Disability Rights Vermont Survey of June 22, 2021***

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**Regular Mail**

***Windham County Humane Society Animal Hold Contract \$350.00***

**Pay Orders**

**Payroll Warrant # 2021-25 dated 6/23/2021 \$1,610.01**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant # 2021-25, dated 6/23/2021, in the amount of \$1,610.01. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2022-02, dated 7/7/2021, in the amount of \$3,328.56. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

**Accounts Payable Warrant**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2022-01, dated 7/7/21, in the amount of \$31,861.43. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

**Set Agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday July 21, 2021**

- Progress on the Round Schoolhouse project America Rescue Plan Act – Update if any August follow up
- VLCT Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training
- Handicap signage
- Pest control
- animal control
- office cleaning

**Adjourn the meeting.**

Ms. Maggio moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, Recording Clerk, July 8, 2021*