

**Approved Minutes**  
**Town of Brookline Selectboard**  
**Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, 6:30 PM**

**Present:**

*Selectboard:* Dot Maggio, David Jones, Gwen Tanza, Bruce Mello

*Members of the Public:* Martha Werman, Mark Bills, Guy Tanza (Videographer), Peter Barus (Recorder)

**Call the meeting to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

**Review changes to the agenda if any**

**Scheduled members of the public**

Ms. Werman (see Minutes, October 17, 2018) reported that logging vehicles are appearing earlier in the morning.

Ms. Maggio noted that there will be discussion on logging policy at the next meeting.

**Unscheduled members of the public**

**Approve Minutes from December 19, 2018**

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Second by Mr. Jones. **All in Favor.**

**Budget discussion**

**A. Changes to any line items**

There was discussion; Ms. Zwick was not available; Mr. Jones noted that WSWMD Landfill Fees (p 5) was approved by the WSWMD; WRC Dues remain an estimate; Ms. Maggio will note this by email to Ms. Zwick.

**B. Discuss surplus (article for vote)**

Ms. Zwick's prior suggestion to wait on 6d while Audits are reviewing was noted. There was discussion of alternatives for allocation of the surplus, which must be retired, either returned to taxpayers or allocated by approval of an Article by the voters.

Ms. Maggio suggested that alternatives be presented formally next meeting, following the Audit.

**C. Discuss wheeled excavator purchase/loan (article for vote)**

Mr. Tanza explained that the VLCT had provided language for the Article; that the asking price was \$94,000.00; that Vermont Treasurer's Association would approve a loan if the Town provided 25%; that the down payment would be \$23,500.00; that an additional \$6,000.00 would be needed.

Ms. Maggio asked Mr. Tanza to prepare the information for next meeting and noted that it will be on the agenda.

There was discussion of funding sources, terms of a loan, etc; that \$39,000.00 is budgeted in the highway fund for Contract Services, some of which will no longer be needed when the new machine is purchased; that the Town spends \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 a year on rental equipment; that this would offset payments for the loan, except for the approximately \$18,000.00 downpayment.

Mr. Bills noted that depreciation may have lowered the purchase price, as others may have rented and used it in the interim. Mr. Tanza reported that the seller was willing to wait until after Town Meeting, and further negotiation would be possible. Mr. Bills noted that the machine has low

**Approved Minutes**  
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**Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, 6:30 PM**

hours and appears to have been well-maintained; that he had run it for a month and found everything functioning well; that there is room beside the grader in the shed; that he can inquire with Newfane (rented it after Brookline). He suggested further research for next meeting.

Mr. Jones noted that there will be a vote on Articles at next meeting, and the wording should be completed based on present information; and suggested that it could be amended later.

**D. Discuss Town Report booklet**

Ms. Maggio discussed the work so far, available for the Selectboard's perusal.

Mr. Jones will complete work with Mr. Webb, and get revised pricing from Springfield Printing since the page count has changed.

He noted that once the Articles are voted and the Audit is completed, the booklet is printed in January for mailing in February.

**Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza**

Mr. Tanza reported that dog licensing started Jan 1 and runs until April 1, after which there will be fines or penalties; that the Rabies Clinic at the Fire Department is not scheduled yet, usually held in March; that the website and bulletin boards have been updated for 2019.

**Highway and Roads**

**A. Road commissioner Update—Guy Tanza**

Mr. Tanza reported that the shoulder and culvert work was done despite weather delays; that he was awaiting word on guardrails from Lafayette. Mr. Bills reported about one third of a load of salt in the shed with more expected Monday, and the sand had been refilled at the quality expected.

**B. Road Supervisor Update—E. Mark Bills**

Mr. Bills reported that the roads have a few new potholes on Athens and Parker; that he had arranged for ¾-inch crushed stone, which stays in place better in bad weather, scheduled for delivery tomorrow (January 3<sup>rd</sup>) weather permitting; that the stone will be stockpiled at the shed for future needs; that he had called about the guardrails, paving and tree work estimates and should have numbers for next meeting; that wind storms and heavy ice have not been as much of a problem as in surrounding towns; that he had trimmed some deadfall and there will be some cleanup to do after the Spring thaw.

Ms. Maggio noted that the tree work he supervised in the past eighteen months has probably averted power outages, and expressed the Selectboard's thanks for his attention to conditions.

**New Business**

**A. Deer Run Nature Preserve request for letter of support.**

Ms. Maggio explained the request to support a plan to conserve 287 acres in Dummerston and 40 acres in Brookline (the Willson property). There was general approval of the project.

Mr. Tanza noted for the attention of the Selectboard that most of the local acreage is already in conservation; that this cuts down the tax base, from \$77 million down to \$69 million; that a quarter-million in valuation was lost last year because of land transactions.

There was discussion of limitations on windmills, etc.

**Approved Minutes**  
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**Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, 6:30 PM**

Ms. Maggio moved that she send a letter to the Deer Run Nature Preserve on behalf of the Selectboard, noting the reduction in taxable land, and expressing support as requested. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

**B. Discuss and vote on closing the Home Improvement Loan Fund**

It was noted that the fund is inactive, with only one person making small payments; there was discussion of \$35,000.00 that was allotted several years ago, and whether it was used; Mr. Mello noted that the BMH funding has been stable at about \$20,000.00; and that there is about \$900.00 in the HIL Fund according to Ms. Zwick.

Mr. Jones moved that the Home Improvement Loan Fund be closed, and the moneys be transferred to the General Fund. Second by Ms. Tanza.

In discussion Mr. Mello noted that the surplus of \$20,000.00 at the end of June is unrelated.

On the Motion, **All in Favor.**

**Old Business**

**A. Sunny Lane Daycare Update – Bruce Mello**

Mr. Tanza reported mailing the lease on the morning following the last meeting; and that nothing has been returned to date. It was noted that the lease must be executed in January.

Mr. Mello reported that he had found the original contracting plans for the school from the time of construction; that it was renovated 1989; that \$370,000.00 had been paid for the addition; that there had been some apparent discrepancies; that the energy audit (\$1,100.00) had been done at a reduced rate three years ago; that he found the insulation described erroneously as vermiculite.

Mr. Mello will call Green Lantern to discuss questions about this at a later time.

Mr. Mello reported that last weekend the drain problem in the building had been explored and discussed with Mr. Bovat and Mr. Bills; that there had been deflection or subsidence of the pipe in the gym area; that he had called Vermont Sewer about this; that a ventilation pipe resting on the septic line could be related, though not determined; that some joists could be cut to allow the pipe to settle back down; that work was in progress; and that he had changed all filters.

Ms. Maggio noted that monthly water testing is no longer required, now only every three months.

Mr. Mello recalled that the water system had been discussed with Mr. Bovat, who requested that he be allowed to manage maintenance, having cleaned and tested the system, and offered to come in March to inspect and adjust it again as part of a regular maintenance schedule.

Mr. Mello asked to re-do the property management job description for a future agenda.

**B. Recycling**

Ms. Maggio reported that there was an email from Doug Wellman, suggesting that recycling be terminated; that a photograph had been included; that she had responded that the issue will come before the Town.

There was discussion. Mr. Jones suggested that there are three issues: trash dumping, nonresidential use, and the rising costs of recycling. In discussion he noted that dumped trash on Ellen Ware Road is generally not recyclable material, and that removing the bins probably would

**Approved Minutes**  
**Town of Brookline Selectboard**  
**Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, 6:30 PM**

impact this; that future legislation will probably make penalties more stringent; that private hauling is more costly to residents than the taxes supporting the recycling center.

There was discussion of the current cost of maintaining the bins (\$18,000.00 per year) and expected increases; of the impact on the budget, which was otherwise level-funded; that this item rose by fifty percent; that the Town should be informed and consulted on continued recycling.

Mr. Jones discussed the cost nonresident use, citing as an indicator that the volume had more than doubled; and options for dealing with this, noting that the location would be expensive to protect.

It was suggested that the recycling be eliminated, saving costs for the Town.

Mr. Jones noted that when the bins were installed, Newfane and surrounding towns had terminated their services. Costs were discussed, \$11,000.00 up to \$18,000.00 (a 63% increase). It was noted that processing costs are beyond the reach of a town; that if the bin has to be changed every three days, costs will rise again; that it now costs \$75.00 per year per household.

It was suggested that the operation may not be viable at the existing scale. There was discussion.

Ms. Maggio will consult about language for an Article on whether to continue recycling.

## **Communications**

### **A. Email**

- Doug Wellman (re: terminating recycling)

### **B. Regular Mail**

- Drinking water and Ground Water Commission, rec'd Dec 19, 2018
- State of Vermont re: Equalized Study Results for Grand List, rec'd 26, 2018 (CLA is 100.33). There was discussion.
- G&R Equipment offering excavator rental, rec'd Dec 26, 2018
- Senior Solutions Annual Report rec'd Dec 29, 18
- State Highway Division Structure Grant (reimbursed 90% for box culvert)
- Rescue, Inc., rec'd Jan 1, 2019 (invoice, \$1,264.49 per month – noting that the line-item can be reduced, the Chair signed the document and filed for Ms. Zwick)
- Certificate of Highway Miles, rec'd Dec 29, 2018 (for review and placed on Agenda for February meeting)

### **A. Payroll**

#### Accounts Payable

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2019-26 in the amount of \$9,292.88 Second by Mr. Jones. **All in Favor.**

#### Pay Orders

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant # 2019-25 in the amount of \$1,636.39 Second by Mr. Mello. (previously signed) **All in Favor.**

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**Set Agenda for the next meeting—January 16, 2019**

**A. Invited members of the public**

- Andy Sheere to discuss logging the Ward's property
- Jorda Chapin—Brookline Representative to Rescue Inc

**B. Set Tax Rate**

**C. Finalize wording for any articles to be included in the Town Report for March**

- Wheeled Excavator
- Surplus
- Recycling
- SLDC
- Approve hwy mileage report

**Adjournment**

Ms Maggio wished Mr. Tanza happy birthday and expressed the Selectboard's thanks.

Ms. Maggio moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Jones. All in Favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.

*Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, recorder January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019*