

Approved Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, September 15, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
(videoconference)

Attending

Selectboard:

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

Town Officers:

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

Members of the Public:

Peter Barus (Recorder)
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 p.m.

Review changes to agenda if any

BMH funding discussion requested.

Open / Review / Discuss / Vote on Electrical Bids for generator hookup & outside lighting upgrades. (Advertised in Reformer & on Website)

Ms. Maggio opened the floor for discussion, noting one bid received, from Larson Electric, for a fixed-position 30-amp panel, LED spotlights, generator connection, code-compliant, for \$2,074.00.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the proposal from Larson Electric as presented, for generator hookup and lighting around the town hall. Second by Mr. Noga. There was discussion; about where the money would come from; that there had been only one bid; that the price seemed high for the work; that the generator was funded by a grant that included security lighting around the building; about other possible maintenance funding sources.

The Chair **tabled the Motion** pending determination of a source of funds for the project.

Review / Approve minutes from September 1, 2021 Regular Meeting

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for September 1, 2021 as amended. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

Scheduled members of the public

None at this time

Unscheduled members of the public

(None.)

New Business

A. Request to add links to our Info web page for veterans to access

Ms. Maggio had received the request. There was discussion of many recent requests to place items on the web page.

B. October 5, 2021 FEMA workshop

Ms. Maggio may attend, and encouraged attendance. There was discussion. Mr. Noga noted a webinar from VLCT on funding scheduled for October 19.

C. Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF) Application

There was discussion of new federal funds and conversations with Mr. Clark, to apply for funds.

D. AOT FY 2022 Grant Funding for Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation – Due Oct 1 2021

Old Business

A. Wheeled Excavator Research

1 – Discuss base requirements and upgrades needed to base model

Mr. Bills reported on efforts to reach rental firms; had calls with Stratton, recent purchaser of the same model Brookline is renting, including a mulch mower that can shred trees in the right-of-way, and the 4-in-one bucket that can pick up logs, rocks, gravel, etc.; Stratton had reported favorably on the equipment, noting three options, and would be willing to present their findings to the selectboard. Mr. Bills had also been trying Wardsboro, still attempting to connect; and will bring more information to the **next meeting**.

Mr. Bills noted that the rental machine had accomplished a great deal of work; that two grants were close to completion; one last three-foot culvert would be installed more easily with the rental machine; that the rental would be available as long as needed, and asked whether the selectboard would consider extending the rental.

There was discussion, about the budget, unexpected expenses, the possibility of holding a special meeting. Mr. Bills will bring further information. Ms. Maggio invited ideas from members. Mr. Jones recommended completing current grant work, and putting additional work being done (because there was equipment) on hold until next Spring; and noted concerns about the town budget; that reimbursement of 75% of FEMA costs was possible; that the highway fund was over-budget from last FY. Mr. Mello concurred with Mr. Jones, citing insufficient information. Mr. Noga suggested a holding pattern until more is known. Ms. Tanza expressed concern about finances. Mr. Jones noted that the town could end up with surplus operating funds, but a highway fund deficit; and that money could not be moved between those accounts; that it was not known whether ARPA money could be used for water-related projects, or what would be permitted.

There was discussion of resiliency issues; that some towns have hired temporary help to work through the ARPA, flood mitigation, and FEMA paperwork required for federal Covid funds; that there were many unknowns. Ms. Maggio suggested that extending the equipment rental was possible, but this could change, and a special meeting could be called if needed.

Mr. Bills reported that the culvert in question was part of a grant in its last stage; that the digging could be outsourced; that some projects could

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be held another season; and that most roads had been put back in order since the last storm.

Ms. Maggio asked that further information on the equipment be pursued.

2 – Discuss RFP

Tabled.

3 – Discuss financing needs for equipment

Mr. Noga discussed finances and potential funding sources, interest rates between 3.5 and 5% as compared with the 2% treasury equipment fund; that commercial banks had similar requirements to the state equipment loan funds; that along with other options, the town had been advised to ask about special municipal rates from vendors; that clarification was needed from the Treasurer as to the structure and interest rates involved in “joint borrowing.”

Mr. Noga discussed financial aspects of equipment rentals; cycles of annual and twice yearly application deadlines; research on auction websites Rutland, Albany, Deerfield NH, at which older models of the machine now being rented were for sale; and offered to pursue further research, attend a virtual sales meeting, etc. There was discussion.

4 – Discuss additional equipment needed by the Road Supervisor to effectively do his job for the town.

There was discussion; most items were tabled for next meeting.

B. Historic Buildings – Committees

1 – Discussion and future plans for Round School House

Mr. Mello discussed needed work, noting Mr. Bills’ offer of wood suitable for historic restoration; and suggested that a work party in October could complete the current projects.

Mr. Noga suggested re-compiling and prioritizing the list of projects. Mr. Mello suggested that other than the windows and the doors, not much was needed.

The todo list for the October 6 meeting will be on the **next agenda**.

2 – Discussion and future plans for Brookline Meeting House

Ms. Maggio noted that the BMH Committee had received bids from Allied Windows, of Cincinnati, and from a local vendor in Newfane, Continental Screen and Glass, for protective storm windows; that after deliberation they had decided on the local vendor, and will bring the proposal to the selectboard; that a gift had come from David Schutt, a Brookline landowner, to protect the 20/20 windows in the sanctuary; that some funds were still on hand from when they inherited the building; that the Committee would like permission to notify the vendor of acceptance, the total cost at \$3,067.78 of which \$1,465.80 would be from the Schutt gift. Mr. Mello suggested there was a lack of direction in dealing with the building. It was noted that the Committee had \$27,000 partly given by the Ladies’ Benevolent Society. There was discussion.

Ms. Maggio moved to authorize the Brookline Meetinghouse Committee to approve the vendor bid for storm protection of three windows on the north side of the church, and the six meeting room windows, for a total of \$3,063.78, of which \$1,465.80 comes from a reserved donation for the sanctuary windows. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

3 – Committee composition / Name of Committee(s) discussion

Ms. Maggio reported that that after discussion with the Meetinghouse Committee about absorbing the Brookline Historical Society, it had been agreed that, as there were two historic buildings in the town, renaming it “Round Schoolhouse Committee” was appropriate; that there could be some sharing of membership with the Brookline Meetinghouse Committee. Ms. Maggio proposed a vote for the **next agenda**. There was discussion; that Ms. Nau had expressed interest in an ex-officio position; that the RSH Committee would have at least two meetings per year; and about potential membership outreach efforts.

C. Job Description for Road Supervisor Discussion

1 – sample Job Descriptions for discussion – Vote or table to October 6

Ms. Maggio had circulated language on responsibilities and qualifications. There was discussion. Mr. Bills offered to work with Mr. Noga on a draft.

D. Round schoolhouse repairs for fall vs repair list for spring

Tabled.

Reports

A. Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza

Mr. Tanza reported on business as usual, conveyances, questions from the public; a few more dogs licensed.

B. Selectboard Chair Report – Dot Maggio

1 – Workshops

Ms. Maggio reported attending the second day of a three-day workshop on Emergency Management, developing contacts with other municipalities who had successful operations committees during the pandemic.

2 – Tattersall Property – Letters sent to land owners

Ms. Maggio had sent letters to Brookline Woods LLC, and the Bell family, and received permission to access the Bell property for flood remediation at to the Tattersall property; that communication was expected from BWLLC soon. There was discussion.

3 – Brookline Baptist Church on the National Historic Registry

Ms. Maggio reported that the BBC had been recognized as a National Historic Building, and added to the National Historic Registry this month; research was in progress on the appropriate plaque for the church as well as the town’s two other registered structures (RSH and Bridge Nineteen); there was discussion.

4 – Open House @ Historic Buildings on Sept 4. Round Schoolhouse & Brookline Meeting House

Ms. Maggio reported a successful event, well-attended, and discussed another Open House to be held Saturday, October 2, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00

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p.m.; Ms. Nau had offered to sit at the RHS again; and thanked volunteers for setting up the bannister on the steps, and general cleanup.

C. Building Commissioner Report – Bruce Mello

1 – Daycare Building

Mr. Mello reported that there was only maintenance coming up.

2 – Town Hall

Mr. Mello suggested a fuller todo list would be available next meeting. There was discussion about rodent abatement; about donated work by Mr. Staats,

D. Highways & Roads Report – E. Mark Bills

1 – Rented excavator

Work completed, Work planned

2 – Beavers or Humans adding wood to culvert on GBR

Ms. Maggio had been informed of materials in a culvert at 931 Grassy Brook Road. Mr. Bills noted removing the obstruction, possibly dumped debris from firewood splitting; and that the beavers in the area were not likely culprits; and that the wheeled excavator had addressed the problem efficiently.

Mr. Bills noted that the signs had arrived. There was discussion of best locations, taking snow conditions into consideration. Mr. Bills noted that the accompanying paint had been formulated for a larger applicator (not purchased); that there was extra paint for maintaining the lines; and discussed Better Backroads and other grants, on schedule; mowing for sight-lines; drainage improvements on Whitney Hill; culvert repairs and replacements to address silting and water issues; also electronic repairs to the grader and other repairs/maintenance; work with Carr Tree (removals); other sight-line improvements; additional flood damage seen from the wheeled excavator, which removed trees obstructing a culvert, and various other erosion sites repaired, some requiring many truckloads of material; some further work to do on Putney Mountain Road; and discussions with Mr. Pickering (VTRANS).

Mr. Bills reported that Nido was selling propane out of Wilmington, could deliver to Brookline, and has a new representative; there was discussion of prices; and of a persistent basement flooding situation on Parker Road.

Communications

A. Email

- Adam Evans re: Veteran resource link request
- Town Fair – ARPA Workshop
- Flood Resistant Communities fund application
- AOT FY 2022 Grant Funding for Municipal highway and Stormwater Mitigation Due by October 1 2021

B. Regular Mail

- Appropriations Thank You Letters

Pay Orders

B. Accounts Payable warrant # 2022

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2022-11-B in the amount of \$28,187.97. Second by Mr. Mello. One abstaining, the Motion passed.

A. Payroll Warrant # 2022

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2022-12 in the amount of \$1,705.71 Second by Mr. Noga. One abstaining, the Motion passed.

Set Agenda for the next meeting – October 6, 2021

- BDCC/SeVeds representative
- ARPA
- Treasury Report
- Highways Equipment
- Review Historical Society / Committees for Historic Buildings
- Generator
- RSH, job description, winterizing town buildings

Adjourn the meeting

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

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, September 22, 2021