

Approved Minutes
Town Of Brookline Selectoard Meeting
Wednesday, October 5, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Present

Board:

Dorothy Maggio (Chair)
Bruce Mello
Stan Noga

Town Officers:

Mark Bills (Road Supervisor)

Public:

Laura Sibilila
Meg Staloff
FACTV
Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m.

Review changes to agenda if any

Bids for Road Salt for Winter 2022-2023

One submission was noted from American Rock Salt, Cargill's expected by regular mail.

Tabled.

Members of the Public

SeVEDS representative re: appropriations request for 2023

Ms. Staloff was introduced and recognized, noting that an email had been circulated to 27 towns in the Windham region, asking to fund SeVEDS (SE Vermont Economic Development Strategies) at \$3 per person, \$1,590 for Brookline; and explained, as the BDCC (Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) representative for the Windham Region (one of 12 regional development organizations) that SeVEDS had its own budget and board but no staff; that BDCC contracted out programs and projects important to economic development of the region such as business assistance programming; micro-lending for businesses, workforce development programs, "Pipelines and Pathways" in all area schools designed to connect high school seniors to opportunities in Vermont, the welcoming communities program for new Americans connecting to employers, community development programs building capacities through trainings, connecting people to resources (like DVFiber), community facilities technical assistance program for nonprofits, help with obtaining USDA funding; and invited questions.

Ms. Maggio asked, and Ms. Staloff confirmed that SeVEDS was working with DVFiber.

Ms. Sibilila asked about an annual update described in the provided booklet, noting that the process encompassed the whole zone including Bennington, showing population trends, etc., goals for the region, data, strategy, identifying projects eligible for federal funds; and the need for a majority of towns to support the request, for designation by federal government as an Economic Development District.

Ms. Staloff explained that the next update would be in 2024, and that SeVEDS anticipated applying this Winter.

There was discussion; of the meaning of "business ready"; broadband; water & sewer; sidewalks, bridges.

Mr. Noga noted an invoice dated July 1, 2021, an annual remittance, request based on plans for upcoming fiscal year; and that the town budget was addressed in January. Ms. Sibilila explained that there would be more information after voters vote on the budget. Ms. Staloff explained that the initial request in summer would start the process, with annual selectboard visits, followed by an invoice if approved by voters. It was noted that a letter of endorsement would be needed in November.

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The floor was opened for questions.

Ms. Sabilia discussed infrastructure.

Mr. Noga discussed housing, noting many moving parts and actors, noting that buyers don't have money, and suggesting a cap on conversion costs, such as hotel to residential; and that all was predicated on profits and commissions.

Ms. Sabilia suggested that the selectoboard was the entity to bring that forward.

Ms. Staloff discussed plans for a housing workshop called "local housing solutions and local housing needs" on December 1; that each community had different needs and housing stock; a workshop for towns at any stage; there would be startup kits, a VHFA toolkit (VFHA attending); and would send an invitation.

Mr. Noga discussed the Housing Trust, that it retains ownership of the land under a 99-year arrangement that gives some equity to owner/occupants, a distribution of value improvement; and aging population issues, people wanting to sell land as a retirement resource. Ms. Sabilia noted similar discussions of population aging, affordable housing, people wanting to downsize.

Pay Orders

Account Payable Warrant

Ms. Maggio **moved** to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2314, dated October 5, 2022, in the amount of \$24,433.02. Second by Mr. Mello.

Parker Road repairs were discussed; the contract not yet returned to the town. Ms. Maggio asked that the check be withheld, still within 60 day pay policy, as the Treasurer had combined the \$22,650 check.

Ms. Maggio **moved to Amend** the Motion to add "check for \$22,650 to be withheld contingent upon receipt of required paperwork."

Mr. Noga will draft a letter to that effect to the vendor.

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

Payroll Warrant

Ms. Maggio **moved** to approve Payroll Warrant #2313, dated September 28, 2022, in the amount of \$1,605.18. Second by Mr. Noga. **All in favor.**

Reports and Updates

Road Supervisor Report - E. Mark Bills

Mr. Bills reported no major projects, pending information on FEMA reimbursement. Ms. Maggio noted that trees, line painting, crack sealing, generator, signage would have to be deferred.

Mr. Bills discussed repositioning a bus stop sign closer to the stop on River Drive; purchasing five or six truckloads of crushed stone (with some left from last season, a good asset for weather events), noting that the source would be closing during winter months (Cersosimo); price and closure date to be forwarded to the Chair for next agenda.

Mr. Bills discussed a three-foot diameter culvert that should be installed before the frost. Ms. Maggio circulated documentation on the project, from last year's storm damage on Putney Mountain Road, that could be mitigated with FEMA grant funds, upsizing three culverts, amount of reimbursement \$4,700 (25% of FEMA estimated mitigation cost, total about \$15,500).

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Ms. Maggio noted a FEMA conference call scheduled for Friday (October 7), with state and federal representatives and the project manager; and had asked for an extension of time to complete the mitigation work, a project Mr. Bills had recommended be completed by October; the pavement replaced already. There was discussion; response to the letter requesting extension suggesting the discussion Friday.

A second mitigation area update was discussed, at Bennett Road, a culvert needing work; FEMA had suggested concrete walls for inlet and outlet; estimated \$79.32% of the hazard mitigation costs would be covered. Mr. Bills discussed logistics of the project; paving work on Putney Mountain; inspection showing tonnage a little over the estimate; the last 100 feet had not been paved, the vendor apparently not planning to return and complete the work, equipment had already been moved out; the RFP had reflected the measurements, but there might have been an error in a proposal; Mr. Clark had sent the RFP, forwarded to the vendor. It was noted that no bill had been received. Mr. Bills noted that the work was not completed, but that the numbers would also need review.

Mr. Noga discussed going over the paperwork with Allstate, who had apparently got their information from Bazin Bros., and noted a significant difference between bids; a vendor had over-calculated and was willing to reduce by up to \$4,000. Mr. Noga explained that one vendor had acknowledged underbidding, and would absorb the cost, but now that the job was not complete it may have been the result of their error.

It was noted that the town had not been invoiced; and that the treasurer would be notified to withhold payment pending review.

Mr. Bills discussed the specifications for the work, and a culvert replacement that could alter the pavement; the site inspected by FEMA; a ledge issue that also could change the paving; and noted detail on the RFP to address these contingencies. There was discussion of the two jobs with one FEMA mitigation.

Mr. Noga discussed a vendor's lack of professionalism.

There was discussion; that the invoice would be held pending further review; that legal advice should be obtained; that the state of the work should be written up and provided to the vendor; that information had been provided, and no vendor action followed.

Mr. Noga will draft a letter to the vendor.

Mr. Bills suggested requesting Mr. Clark's advice.

Mr. Bills discussed stone prices and estimates; culvert purchase for Putney Mountain had been a driveway culvert installed by Sam Bourne; several had been rusted out, all replaced except the one, and Sam Bourne had asked permission to install new ones; citing the town policy on maintenance after first installation, the town would pay for the culverts and not installation; no 15 inch culverts on hand, gave permission to use the WW account; the accountants had asked about the purchase; Mr. Bourne would drop it off a receipt and description.

Ms. Maggio noted that Ms. Acampora had confirmed the expenditure for culverts.

Mr. Noga discussed the responsibility of the town to replace culverts. Mr. Bills suggested clarifying the policy. Ms. Maggio noted this for the **next agenda**.

Ms. Maggio discussed the ash tree removal budget. Mr. Bills explained removal would not involve

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replacement. Ms. Maggio will write to the UVM Extension to inquire about grants.

There was discussion of vandalism to a gate on Ellen Ware Road.

Highways and Grants Report - Stan Noga

Hill Road repairs : Grant Report

Mr. Noga discussed Grants-in-Aid for the Hill Road repair, a \$6,700 invoice required for reimbursement on hand; materials and labor, equipment rental, must be itemized; and it may be necessary to send a facsimile of the payment check.

Ms. Maggio noted that the check had been combined with another payment.

Mr. Noga explained that a photo should be taken from the previous location (inspected with Jeff Nugent) for VTRANS; that Mr. Nugent had offered help with the paperwork; and discussed timelines, last date was December 31.

Ms. Maggio suggested obtaining an invoice on Hill Road from Mr. Clark.

Mr. Noga discussed the Larson Electric contract for GFCI and hookup, heat pump, paperwork, and signature; and the Larson complaint about the contract process.

Ms. Maggio noted the need for an administrative assistant.

WRC - Salt Sand Shed Project

Mr. Noga noted the project apparently on hold, and suggested conferring with Wardsboro on theirs; and had emailed Ms. Ghia (WRC) about what changes they might recommend.

Building Commissioner Report - Bruce Mello

Mr. Mello invited questions. Ms. Maggio asked about a breaker at BMH (replaced), and contacting a plumber (Mr. Mello will do).

It was noted that the BMH committee had talked with painter about rescheduling painting the steeple for spring.

Town Clerk Report - Guy Tanza

No report received.

Selectboard Chair Report - Dot Maggio

Set date and time for Executive Session to review... Job descriptions, Job performance/evaluation, Job benefits

The selectboard discussed scheduling. Ms. Maggio suggested an open meeting without quorum to work with Mr. Noga on issues and schedule executive session another time; to work out the IRA process; and prepare a presentation for a full meeting November 2.

Legal Posting of Act 250 re: Inner Fire Inc.- Schedule G emailed III.

Ms. Maggio noted email to members, asking the town clerk to post. Mr. Noga noted an Act 250 application under review, asking for an extension of fifty months, regarding three additional structures; expecting approval, then to hear from abutters, etc.; post to bulletin board.

Public Hearing via ZOOM - Windham Regional Commission Bylaw Amendment Public Hearing Notice Thursday Oct 13, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Any other reports or discussion from the selectbord

It was noted that a FEMA conference on mitigation, deadline extension request was scheduled for 9:30 Friday (October 7). There was discussion;

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An RSH open house was announced, for Saturday, 10:30 to 1:00 p.m., postponing the memorial garden until spring.

New Business

Budget Season - Planning for Town Meeting 2023

A question about town meeting at BMH in the next year or two was reviewed. It was determined that there was no heat, small space, and it would not be possible for the foreseeable future.

It was noted that budget season would begin November 2.

There was discussion; of the BMH storm windows, a local vendor refunded deposit, a second bid received from Allied in Ohio, inquiry by Dan Towler found that they would offer a 20% discount on 11 windows, to measure, manufacture and deliver, installation to be done by others; recommended by historic preservation group; at cost of \$5,337 of which \$3,000 was a gift from David Shutt. There was discussion.

Mr. Mello recommended that nothing external be done until a specialist had analyzed the mold problem.

Old Business

Administrative Assistance short term/long term discussion

Tabled.

ARPA Appropriations

Tabled.

Communications

Email

- Emerald Ash Borer: Confirmed in Townshend
- NBFDD: 75th Anniversary Committee Forming
- Grants in Aid - Sub recipient report delinquent letter from VT AOT (Treasurer found and filed, got receipt; VTRANS informed)

Regular Mail

Ms. Maggio circulated an item.

**Review / Approve minutes from
September 21, 2022 Regular Selectboard Meeting**

Tabled.

September 7, 2022 Emergency Meeting

Tabled.

Set Agenda for October 19, 2022 A.

- SeVEDS Support letter
- Cost of winter gravel
- Putney Mountain Paving
- New Culvert Policy
- Signage in town needing repair
- WRC discussion
- Mold Remediation
- Budget Planning

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Adjourn the meeting

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

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, recording secretary, October 13, 2022