

Approved Minutes
Town Of Brookline Selectoard Meeting
Tuesday, December 21, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Present

Board:

Dorothy Maggio (Chair)
Bruce Mello
Stan Noga

Town Officers:

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

Public:

Alex Stradling (FACTV)
Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Review changes to Agenda if any

Mr. Noga added a water test on Merrill Drive; a light on all night at BMH; for New Business.

Health order discussion, Old Business.

Review / Approve Minutes from December 7, 2022 meeting

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for December 7, 2022. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

Members of the Public

A. Scheduled

B. Unscheduled

Budget Review / Town Meeting Review

A. Review - Discuss areas of General Budget

Ms. Maggio noted use of similar town operating revenues to last year where appropriate. Mr. Noga discussed delinquent tax payments, none expected for FY 2024. There was discussion of the process.

Ms. Maggio discussed salaries (provided on paper); estimated emergency hours; Treasurer wages. There was discussion of Listers' wages; that a reappraisal was not necessary, although there had been new construction; Auditors' hours; Assistant Town Clerk increase; election officials (no election this year); assistant Treasurer; selectboard recording clerk (retiring); animal control officer stipend; Town Clerk (extra hours); Road Commissioner stipend; Building Commissioner and Grant Coordinator stipends; payroll taxes (estimated); payroll service fees; office supplies & purchases (computer hardware, etc.).

Mr. Mello suggested applying SLP rental revenues. Ms. Maggio noted that the rental fees were not in the budget; that it should be documented, a discussion for **next agenda**. There was discussion of funds related to the various buildings owned by the town. Mr. Noga suggested establishing a new account for rental income under operating revenues. Mr. Mello suggested budgeting the fund specifically (such as for purchasing computers).

Ms. Maggio discussed the office supplies budget, taking the building revenue sources into account. The selectboard discussed town report expenses, changes in printing costs; Planning Commission expenses, in light of the extended period for Town Plan updates.

Mr. Noga asked about what expense category should be used for office supplies. There was discussion of whether a computer purchase should be listed under supplies and postage.

There was discussion, that there would be no election grant to carry over; about abatements; seminars, mileage, electricity, BMH electric service; fuel; maintenance; wi-fi vendor; fire alarms; legal services; rescue services; fire services; mutual aid; the copier contract.

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Ms. Maggio noted that Ms. Brown had responded to a question about town maintenance, and that the tree service vendor should be under a different category, as should signage.

There was discussion of various invoiced amounts under the maintenance heading, highlighted for review as to appropriate categories; of what constituted maintenance, versus renovation work.

Category changes were made to certain line items.

There was discussion of VLCT dues, WRC dues, law enforcement; category changes under insurance and bonds, highway insurance expense under town highway expenditures, possibly splitting into workmen's compensation and casualty insurance; town insurance and bonds under law enforcement; county tax; FACTV; fire permits; banking; current use.

B. Review - Discuss areas of Highway Budget

The selectboard discussed estimated current taxes, and better back roads grants. Mr. Noga provided background about the salt & shed grant, reimbursement amounts, and the possibility of a process that would reduce the number of transactions between the WRC and the town.

There was discussion of permit revenues; salaries; mileage; WRC grant expenditures (matching); payroll; summer contract services; tree service to be moved into the 2023 budget.

Ms. Maggio explained that FEMA would be approving the mitigation work (90%), but expenditures would be required before reimbursement; that in the next budget a spike in revenues would be likely from FEMA reimbursements.

Mr. Noga anticipated possible additional expenses as part of withdrawing from the salt shed program.

There was discussion of FEMA costs. Mr. Bills noted equipment time, culvert areas, paving; application of ditch stone. Ms. Maggio noted that the two areas of FEMA expense were contract services and materials; and that the previous fall work had stopped for lack of funds.

It was noted that FEMA had asked for a single number, regardless of how many vendors, etc., had been involved; and budget increases would be made in light of expected reimbursement by FEMA at 90%.

There was discussion of Winter contract services; materials; shed electricity; construction of a cover for the gravel; deferred maintenance during the salt & sand shed project. Mr. Bills explained low-budget shed maintenance for which funds should be set aside for a year.

There was discussion of seminars; highway insurance; VTRANS fees; changes to both the system and the region. Ms. Maggio reviewed equipment, parts, fuel, maintenance; signage and miscellany; culverts; retreatment; bridge maintenance; highway equipment rental; better back roads grant; bond principal and interest; small tools and equipment.

C. Review - Discuss Appropriations List

Grouped Appropriations that have not changed

Individual articles for appropriations that have increased.

Individual articles for appropriations that are \$1,000.00 or more.

Late appropriations requests

Ms. Maggio explained the recommendations and there was consensus in favor. Ms. Maggio reviewed the current appropriations requests; there was discussion.

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Non binding question about a future appropriation request

Ms. Maggio explained that the BMH was working on a survey to send and make available at Town Meeting; that the question was about appropriating tax money for the building; it was suggested that this be taken up again at the **next meeting**.

Mr. Noga suggested that the school house (leased to SLP) should remain a self-sustaining building, and surplus funds could be used for other purposes.

D. Discuss wording for changing treasurer from elected to an appointed position.

Ms. Maggio noted that VLCT had recommendations; that the wording from VLCT was nine pages. Mr. Noga suggested that the timeline be obtained for the next meeting. Mr. Mello suggested a vote on the matter. Mr. Noga noted that the position had been very difficult to fill by election.

E. Discuss Administrative Assistant position and wording

Ms. Maggio suggested developing an Article for Town Meeting. Ms. Maggio will research the statutory need for a Warning, etc.

F. Discuss salary raises

There was discussion.

G. Discuss how to purchase equipment / vehicles

Ms. Maggio suggested proceeding, with professional help. Mr. Mello discussed two needed vehicles, ARPA funding, etc., and the need for action. Mr. Noga noted the complexity of using ARPA money.

H. Discuss Building Commissioner stipend of \$500

Addressed above.

I. Discuss Grant Supervision stipend of \$500

Addressed above.

J. Discuss audit by outside agency for 2023-24

Ms. Maggio noted that Ms. Brown had discussed the idea. There was consensus against, for the present.

Old Business

A. Cota and Cota Service contract for boiler

Mr. Mello discussed the relationship; a recent invoice for the service account; hopes for better performance. There was discussion.

Health Department - Water system test

Mr. Noga explained that the inspections had suggested tests for additional contaminants; currently in compliance, the case had been closed.

New Business

A. Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP) have awarded State Historic Preservation Grant Funds in an amount up to \$15,000.00 to partially fund the historic preservation project. The Town of Brookline pledged to match the VDHP grant of \$15,000.00 by applying ARPA funds to the approved project. A vendor contract packet between the Town of Brookline with Kerry Bourne for the work will need to be put together.

There was discussion; that work would not commence until April; that ARPA funds must be allocated beforehand.

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BMH Lights

Mr. Noga suggested that the lighting hours were not appropriate. It was noted that the sign was solar powered.

Summaries / Updates / Reports

A. Highway Supervisor - E. Mark Bills

GPS coordinates needed for the 15 in culverts which should be upsized to 18 “ under the FEMA mitigation project 4621. The areas damaged by the undersized culverts are:

-42.992492 - 72.602749 And

-42.995716 - 72.600977

Location between Bennett Road and Banning Road on Putney Mnt Road.

FEMA has included the 36 Inch culvert upgrade requested

Ms. Maggio explained the area of damage, and the need to obtain the coordinates of the specific culvert in need of upgrading; and discussed another culvert that had been confirmed in need of replacement.

Mr. Bills discussed the recent storm, multiple trees down in roads; work during the storm so that plowing could continue; some requiring GMP to remove the trees from the wires; grader work with Mr. Clark on a tree that had rolled into the brook, cleaned up; work with Mr. Noga on the roads inventory.

B. Grants - Stanley Noga

MRPG

Mr. Noga acknowledged Mr. Bills' help, and discussed hours of work on compliance; listed conditions that would not allow compliance; courses on the use of the software involved to photograph sites; completion not needed until April 1, not December 31, per VTRANS; noted a new AoT portal, and that the town was in good standing, largely thanks to Mr. Bills and Mr. Clark.

Salt & Sand Shed

Mr. Noga discussed reimbursements, to be determined by the Secretary of Transportation; and certain items in need of confirmation that reimbursements were actually made, for funds that were actually paid.

Ms. Maggio recommended, in light of the advice to cancel the Salt & Sand Shed project, a written document stating clearly the town's reasons for refusing the grant. Mr. Noga cited a formatted email that had covered the issue, that the town had voted on.

C. Building Commissioner - Bruce Mello

Nothing further to report.

Cota and Cota Service Contract for Boiler 2)

Selectboard Chair Report - Dot Maggio

Vermont Bond Loan

Email / Web site Domain planning TBD

Power Emergency

Auditors will work over the winter break on the books

Ms. Maggio explained each item.

E. Any other reports or discussions by members of the Selectboard

Ms. Maggio discussed the Historic Preservation Award report, noting the deadline of December 31, 2024 to complete the project.

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Warrants

A. Payroll Warrant

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2325, dated December 1, 2022, in the amount of \$1,525.53. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2326, dated December 1, 2022, in the amount of \$29,717.76. Second by Mr. Noga.

Mr. Mello noted different invoice number. Ms. Maggio located the documents. Mr. Mello explained that one invoice was correct, and suggested the other was in need of revision.

Ms. Maggio explained that the Treasurer would be informed.

Ms. Maggio moved to amend the motion to deduct the amount of \$127.39 from Warrant #2326, because of the commingling of SLP service warranty (445) and credit due to the town; Mr. Mello will communicate this to the Treasurer. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

On the Amendment, all in favor.

On the Motion, all in favor.

Communications

A. Regular Mail

B. E-Mail

Set Agenda for the next meeting - Wednesday January 4, 2023

A. Budget

B. Town Warning / Articles for Town Meeting Report

Adjourn

Ms. Maggio moved to Adjourn. All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, recording secretary, December 28, 2022