

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, February 15, 2023

Present:

Selectboard:

Dorothy Maggio (Chair)

Bruce Mello

Stanley Noga

Town Officers:

E Mark Bills (Rd. Supervisor)

Guy Tanza (Town Clerk) by Zoom

Public:

Jules Lavoie

FactTV8 online

- Call meeting to order at 6:31 PM
- Changes to agenda
 - Signing of Tax Dept. Form - No Appeal or Suit Pending
 - Introduction of Jules Lavoie for Recording Secretary Trial
- Members of the public- 5 minutes per person
 - Scheduled - None
 - Unscheduled - None

Review/Approve Minutes

- Dot Maggio (DM) stated a **review of January 18, 2023 minutes** and asked if there were any changes. DM motioned to approve minutes as amended. Bruce Mello (**BM**) **2nded motion. Approved unanimously.**
- DM stated **review of February 1, 2023 minutes.** Revisions discussed. DM motioned to approve said minutes as amended. **BM 2nded motion. Approved unanimously.**

New Business:

- DM presented a **Brookline Meetinghouse questionnaire** which seeks permission to copy, have copies at town office and place on town website. DM asked if all approved of doing so. The results of the survey would be made available in April. Survey Monkey in conjunction with the survey will be used.
- **BRIC Grant RFP form** presented by DM. She reviewed form and completed as necessary. Basic RFP to be placed in Brattleboro Reformer with reference to Brookline website for formal RFP form. Closing date to be 03/15/2023. Grant to cover cost of **updating Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.** Matter previously discussed and approved at a SB meeting.

Old Business:

A. ARPA

- 1) **ARPA money use.** DM motioned to **transfer of \$15,000 of ARPA funds** to the Brookline Meetinghouse Fund as Brookline's match to the \$15,000 Vermont Division for Historic Preservation Grant for foundation work. Match is 50% /50%.

Stan 2nded the motion. Open for discussion. Guy Tanza asked why the SB is not asking the citizens if they support the using of ARPA money for this project. Dot stated that it is the smallest amount of ARPA money to date used. The matter has been on several SB Agendas and discussed. Use complies with ARPA guidelines, money formally requested by Brookline Meetinghouse Committee at a warned SB meeting. As a 50/50 match it leverages ARPA monies to complete a \$30,000 project. ARPA money has been used at the Day Care Center for heat pumps, town office repairs and the RFP had been placed upon the town website. BM and SN added to discussion in favor of use of the money for the desired purpose. **No vote taken to approve the \$15,000 ARPA money match.**

- 2) **ARPA money.** Dot motioned to approve **transfer an additional \$35,000 to the Brookline Meetinghouse Committee (BMH) Fund.** BM 2nded. This with # 1 above commits a total of \$50,000 to BMH Fund. Dot made suggestion to table the motion until results of survey is available. Since this motion was not part of any other pledge or action by the SB, Dot “might have to recuse herself from voting on this issue”. DM then recused herself. Action on this motion is left to two SB members. Bruce wishes to put the motion to vote. Stan wishes to table the vote. **Per Robert Rules, with an even vote the motion is not acted upon and fails.**
- 3) DM motioned to **transfer from ARPA monies i/a/o \$5,000 and donate to DVFiber.** This is in support of DVFiber’s efforts to provide broad band service to Windham County. If donation is done before May 30, 2023, Vermont Community Broad Band will match the donated amount. Ultimately, this constitutes a \$10,000 donation. **Stan 2nded. Unanimously approved.**
- 4) Motion to **amend a prior motion at the August 12, 2021 SB meeting** whereby **ARPA monies** were voted to be placed **into the Highway Salary Account** to cover the increase in both employment hours and hourly rate of the Highway Supervisor. The hourly rate was increased from \$24.00/hr. to \$30.00/hr. The total hours to be worked per year is capped at 1,560 hours. The previous motion did not specify upon what salary a matching 5% would be placed in a qualified retirement account. **The salary is hereby defined as “gross salary”.** **Bruce 2nded motion. Unanimously approved.**

B) Discussion of purchasing a town truck – possibly Ford F250. DM referenced the wheeled excavator in the next agenda item. DM asked which is most important: a truck or a wheeled excavator? BM stated that the town needs both and we can pay cash for the truck and finance the wheeled excavator. Given the differing purchase methods, BM does not think that they are related. DM stated that the truck would not serve heavy duty work and its only current use is to drive around.

Dot stated that she felt an excavator would be the first thing to be purchased. SN stated that he felt our priority should be a wheeled excavator or similar equipment. The truck under discussion does not have a heavy rear box or floor. He suggested waiting to the VT AOT auction in May on the 13th. He expressed concern for the municipal tax increase of \$266,000 for a typically assessed \$200,000 house with additional increase in educational taxes also expected. He expressed care in spending at this time.

Dot explained the legal opinion of the VLCT attorney and requirements as to how the method of purchase and source of monies determines whether or not voter approval is required. Use of only ARPA money does not require voter approval since

those monies are not from taxation of the town's citizens. Purchase via the Municipal Equipment Loan Fund of the Vermont Treasurer's Department does not by statute require voter approval. Any other type of source funds or process does require voter approval. DM further added that possibility of a lease with option to purchase as a means of acquiring equipment.

C. Discussion about Wheeled Excavator priority. See B above.

Reports and Updates

A. Road Supervisor – E Mark Bills (EMB)

- **Roads are slippery** due to road surface thaw from warm temperatures.
- **Extra stone** has been applied on some dirt roads and town may have to obtain more stone
- Immediate weather predictions indicate warm weather but then getting colder with snow forecasted.
- EMB visited with Archie Clark to discuss additional **FEMA work** and **creating an RFP**.
- Numbers of culvert **wing walls** must be clarified as a part of the RFP.
- **Paving of Putney Mtn Rd** will need to be completed- 80 ft long and 20 ft wide. EMB stated that should be done after the culvert work due to changing road height resulting from culvert work.
- **Equipment upkeep** proceeding.
- Stan asked if RFP will be a master containing all work or whether there will be an RFP for each task. EMB indicated that it will be a mix: some combined and some separate.
- Stan asked for copy of FEMA report which contains work site info. Dot provided Stan with a spare copy.
- For all work to be done, an **onsite vendor inspection will be required** to eliminate confusion. All bidders will be required to attend site inspection.
- **Target date** for all work is the **end of August** due to timelines and ANR timeframes.
- **FEMA deadline** for work to be completed is **12/31/2023**.
- Dot interjected the need to **create and forward a vendor contract package to Kerry Bourne** for Meetinghouse Foundation work. Stan will complete and have to vendor by 04/01/2023. End date for job completion is 12/2024.

B. Highway Grants and Contracts – Stan Noga (SN)

- **Follow-up with Dist. 2 AOT** to define outstanding grants and categories, work and deadlines.
 - **Center Line Painting** – Dist. 2 requests info about paving projects. When will work be done, extent of area to be repaired. Stan to communicate with Dist. 2. **Town Highway Structures Grant and Town Highways Grant application. Both are needed by 04/15/2023.**
 - **Per Mark, Brookline is waiting for a grant for Culvert replacement near Tattersall property.**
 - Mark stated that Dist. 2 helps us with **paving matching grants program.**
 - Stan referenced **annual TA60** to be done and its affects on monies in natural emergencies.

C. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello – stated that he wishes to table his presentation until the next select board meeting.

D. Town Clerk Report – Guy Tanza (GT)

- Reminded of School Meeting on 03/22/2023. Ballots being brought to school central location, so no counting needed in Brookline.
- Upon request by Stan of need status of JPs for counting ballots at Town Meeting, GT stated there would be enough JPs at meeting and no need for more. There will be a **sufficient BCA members present**. Marie Tattersall should be able to not attend if she wants. Guy will contact Marie to advise.

E. Selectboard Chair – Dorothy Maggio (DM)

- Dot tried to contact **Emmit Larson, electrician, about electrical supply of generator in power outages. How to add water well to generator power**. Guy stated that the generator could not handle the whole building. Bruce stated that there should be no problem with it handling entire building. Emmit had stated that two lights need to be removed to run whole building.
- Dot asked Guy about **rabies clinic**. Guy stated that Humane Society serves Brookline and can be of assistance in this matter.
- Dot provided summary of **Sheriffs meeting** in Townshend.
- Dot presented **VLCT advisement of equipment purchase**. VLCT referred town to Kate Buckley, ARPA specialist, for further advice.
- **FEMA paperwork** can be signed off on **Ellen Ware, Whitney Hill and Parker Rd. Of the \$12,972.38 spent, \$11,675.14 will be reimbursed by FEMA (90%)**.
- **Purchased OWL recording device** for \$1,049.00. Checked three places for devices and prices. Selected the most recommended device.
- **Listserv** to be used for clarification to community on topics: ARPA , Appropriations, etc.
- Sign **PVR Form 4155, Notice of No Suit or Appeal by SB**. Annual report.
- **David Parker, Moderator**, is available to discuss Town Meeting process. Dot will set-up date and time.
- **No Potluck coordinator**. Will review options.
- **FactTV8** will record Town Meeting.
- Dot and Stan attended **ARPA Meeting at Bellows Falls Opera House**. Summarized ARPA money available from various state agencies for various needs and types of projects. One was Energy Resiliency with \$45,000,000 available state wide through regional planning commissions.
- Dot presented **reappraisal topic** whereby over 160 Vermont Towns' CLA and/or COD property valuation statistics exceed acceptable limits. Statutorily, all are required to perform reappraisals. However, there are only 4-5 reappraisal firms in the state. Legislature attempting to find ways to ease reappraisal time limits to allow the compliance process to "payout" over time. Deadline to Legislative Committee input is 02/16/2023. Legislative suggestions, thus far, eliminate a state funded per parcel amount of \$8.50 and doubling the \$1.00 state funded amount

to \$2.00 per parcel. Proposed net loss to towns in state funding per parcel is \$7.50.

Communications

- **Meetinghouse survey.**
- **RFP for BRIC Grant**
- **VLCT communication for legal opinion**
- **Permit Navigation Seminar Notice** for training in software, Permit Navigator.

Pay Orders

- **Dot** motioned to approve **Payroll Warrant 23-33 i/a/o \$4817.25. Stan 2nded. Unanimously approved.**
- **Dot** motioned to approve **Accounts Payable Warrant 23-32 i/a/o \$17,190.78. Bruce 2nded. Unanimously approved.**
- **Dot** added that she again emailed **Judy Acampora** asking for **clarifications of amounts paid for recycling.**

Next Meeting Agenda

- Review **ARPA**
- Discuss any **lingering Town Meeting matters**
- **Potluck Supper** Update

Respectfully Submitted,

Stanley E Noga, Jr.

Temporary Secretary