

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Special Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Present:

Selectboard (SB):

Dorothy Maggio (DM) (Chair)
Stanley Noga (SN) (Vice-Chair)
Bruce Mello (BM)
Paul Madalinski (PM)
Somara Zwick (SZ)

Town Officers:

Guy Tanza (GT) (Town Clerk) (Zoom)
E Mark Bills (EMB) (Highway
Supervisor)
Vanessa Ballou (VB) (Recording
Clerk)

Public:

FactTV online
Michael DeSocio (MS)
Archie Clark (AS)

1. Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

Archie Clark joined the meeting at 7:33 PM. GT, SZ, and PM left the meeting at 8:58 PM.

2. Any Changes to the Agenda

None.

3. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled members

None.

B. Unscheduled Members

None.

4. Budget Planning for 2024-2025

As indicated in the agenda, the SB discussed the budget line-by-line and determined whether budget items needed to be changed compared with the current or previous years' budget levels. Decisions and recommendations regarding specific items are summarized below. The discussion began with D. Appropriations.

A. Highway budget

The SB and Archie Clark reviewed the budget and made specific adjustments to reflect the town's acquisition of the excavator, mowing attachment, and dump truck, to reflect the completion of repairs from the 2021 July storm, and to anticipate potential increases due to inflation.

B. Stipends

Positions with stipends are appointed annually in April and are currently funded at \$500 – including the following positions: Building Commissioner, Highway Grants & Contracts, Animal Control Officer, Road Commissioner, and Chair of Selectboard.

C. New Positions

1) Administrative Assistant

The SB discussed combining the responsibilities of an Administrative Assistant and Assistant Treasurer as a part-time position. This position could also be responsible for the highway grants and contracts. This was budgeted as \$11,500 for the Assistant Treasurer and \$5,500 for the Administrative Assistant - \$17,000 in total.

2) Road Supervisor on call assistant

This position will be budgeted at \$10,400 based on 8 hours per week at \$25 per hour.

3) Lister - in training // Lister doing the training per hour rate consideration

A person has expressed an interest in being trained as a lister. DM questioned if it would be appropriate to provide the lister who will do the training with additional compensation. The SB recognized that the listers' compensation should be increased and tabled a more detailed discussion until next week's meeting.

The SB noted that the Lister's salary was increased previously to \$16 per hour, however, she does not appear to have received the increase.

D. Appropriations

Appropriations greater than \$1,000 will be presented as separate articles for the community to vote on at the 2024 Town Meeting – including the Newbrook Fire & Rescue request for \$10,000. Recurring appropriations of \$1,000 or less will be listed together and total \$8,156 as of the meeting. No new requests for appropriations were received; some organizations that have requested appropriations in the past did not submit a request. SeVEDS (Brattleboro Development Credit Corp/Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies) had asked for an appropriation of \$1,590 this summer; this request will be included as a separate article (note: only \$500 was approved at the 2023 Town Meeting).

E. ARPA Funds

The Newbrook Fire & Rescue requested \$10,000 from the Brookline ARPA fund to finance a new firetruck. Newfane gave \$100,000.

F. Review previous line items as necessary for budget purposes

The SB reviewed the Town's operating expenses and updated the budget based on actuals, projected increases, and communications about updated rates/fees from service providers.

G. Any other topic as requested by a member of the selectboard not requiring a vote

1) 4720 Storm (July 2023)

SN explained that FEMA has asked for the cost of everything that has been done to bring a site back to its original condition and cost estimates for any site work that has not been done. FEMA has also requested an engineering statement from a firm with an estimate of costs for the mitigation that the Town would like to do. The discussion focused on the following 3 sites – all of which have had hydraulic studies: Kirsch Road/Hill Road bridge, Ellen Ware Road culvert, and Parker Road – large culvert & two 18-inch culverts. No engineering studies have been contracted. SZ recommended having Melissa Brown involved given her knowledge of Newfane's experience with FEMA. The Town is expected to complete the benefit cost analysis. There is a January 14, 2024 deadline.

2) Ellen Ware Road Repair

The SB and Archie Clark discussed options and potential costs for repairing the culvert on Ellen Ware Road which is cracked, has 3 feet of air space underneath it, has signs of rust, and is likely 30 years old. One approach would be to do limited repairs that would bring the structure back to its original condition along with minimal improvements that would reduce the risk of its failing. The culvert is not in compliance with current hydraulic standards. If a limited repair approach isn't viable, the Town would need to hire an engineer to design a new structure. Because of the proximity to West River,

work will require a permit from Scott Jensen, Vermont State Stream Alteration Engineer, and from the Army Corps of Engineers who have jurisdiction over the river.

3) Repair on Grassy Brook Road

FEMA has asked for additional details regarding the repairs on Grassy Brook Road which SN has provided.

5. Agenda Items for Next Budget Discussion

- A. Follow-up regarding budget questions raised during meeting
- B. Salaries
- C. 2 Wired Guys contract
- D. TBD

6. Adjourn the Meeting

DM moved to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was **adjourned at 9:15 PM.**

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk