

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, January 3, 2024

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)
Melissa Brown (MB) (Treasurer)
(Zoom)
E Mark Bills (EMB) (Highway
Supervisor)
Vanessa Ballou (VB) (Recording
Clerk)

Public:

FactTV online
Michael DeSocio (MS)
Dan Towler (DT) (Zoom)
Kerry Bourne (KB)

1. Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

2. Any Changes to the Agenda

Agenda items 9. B. and C. were tabled.

3. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled members on requested topic (10 minutes)

None.

B. Unscheduled Members on agenda items only (5 minutes)

Kerry Bourne (KB) was present to sign the Work Change Order for the Brookline Meeting House (BMH) foundation repair and reported that he completed the work. SN inspected and photographed the work, confirmed that it was completed, noted that the vapor barrier was working – KB said he used two layers of 6 mm vapor barrier. The SB complimented KB on the quality of the completed work. DM made a motion to close out the BMH foundation project, which was supported by a Vermont Historic Preservation grant, the Town's ARPA grant, and the BMH fund account; PM seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

4. Review and Approve Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes – December 20, 2023

The SB reviewed the draft minutes and identified changes. DM motioned to approve the edited version of the minutes; SN seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

5. Warrant Orders

A. Payroll Warrant

DM made a motion to approve the payroll warrant 2426 dated January 3, 2024 in the amount of \$1,890.45; BM seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant

DM made a motion to approve accounts payable warrant 2427 dated January 3, 2024 in the amount of \$18,349.42; SN seconded. DM noted that the total included \$10,500 for the first installment of the Town's snow road plowing and salting. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

A. Contract for Two Wired Guys

The group discussed the additional language from the Town's model contract included in the 2WiredGuys contract and whether it was necessary given their long history with the Town. The SB agreed to wait for input from 2WiredGuys before signing the contract. DM made a motion to contact 2WiredGuys for their review and signature; PM seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

B. MTAP Priority discussion - 10-15 minutes

The SB reviewed the reports summarizing the November 11, 2023 MTAP meeting and identified questions for clarification. Regarding access to the West River at the bridge, DM noted that the access point is private property. The SB decided that the next MTAP meeting should be rescheduled to a Saturday - January 13, 2024, if possible - to allow the public to attend the meeting.

C. ARPA - Obligation discussion -5 minutes

The remaining ARPA funds (approximately \$46,000) need to be obligated. At the next (January 17, 2024) SB Meeting, the SB members will present their ARPA obligation ideas in writing to be prioritized and then presented in some format to the Town.

D. Highway Per Diem Help discussion for current year

EMB has followed up with potential candidates, but they have indicated that they have plenty of work; he is continuing to look.

E. Administrative Assistant discussion for current year

The SB will advertise in the Front Porch Forum for an Administrative Assistant for the remaining fiscal year with the possibility of continuing next year. SZ will draft a notice and volunteered to be the point of contact. The proposed hourly rate is \$20.

F. FEMA discussion if any

1) FEMA 4621 (July 2021 Storm)

SZ reported that all the paperwork has been filed for the July 2021 storm and FEMA has acknowledged receipt.

2) FEMA 4720 (July 2023 Storm)

SN has a call scheduled on Friday, January 5th with FEMA to clarify questions.

G. BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) Program / Hazard Mitigation Plan Development report due

DM will submit the Quarterly Report update. Margo Ghia informed DM that she has not started writing the new/updated Hazard Mitigation Plan because new requirements for the contents require revisions to the plan format.

7. BUDGET and Town Report

A. Schedule for Due Dates-January/February 2024

The SB discussed the logistics and timing of reports for the Annual Town Report. Reports are to be emailed to SN. The first date for warnings and notices is January 25, 2024, the last date to post warnings and notices is February 4, 2024, the last day to distribute annual auditor's report is February 24, 2024, and the Town Meeting is Monday, March 4, 2024.

B. Salary Guide & Stipend Review

The SB discussed salaries and agreed on a 5% increase, rounded according to mathematical rules, across the board. They will vote on the increases once they have been calculated.

C. Budget Stabilization Funding for 2024-25

In follow-up to the December 20, 2023 SB Meeting, DM distributed a new policy for the Budget Stabilization/Rainy Day Fund based on the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) template. The Town residents approved the establishment of a Budget Stabilization/Rainy Day fund with an appropriation of \$20,000 at the 2021 Town Meeting. Following discussions about the policy language, DM made a motion to accept a new policy called a Budget Stabilization Rainy Day Fund Policy for the Town of Brookline as presented; SZ seconded; the motion passed unanimously. This is a living document describing best practices as well as what not to spend these funds on. All the SB Members signed the policy.

The discussion of how much to increase the fund was tabled.

D. Windham County Sheriff regionalized ACO program

During previous meetings, the SB discussed this program which would take responsibility for viscous dogs, dogs at large, and attendance at municipal court hearings. The cost is based on the Town's population of 540 residents. Windham County has a full-time animal control officer; this service would be in addition to the Town's Animal Control Officer who would continue to be responsible for barking dogs and other animal complaints. DM will need to update the Town's Animal Control Ordinance and present it at the Town Meeting. A budget line item for \$1,400 was added for Regionalized Animal Control Officer with Windham County Sheriff.

E. Budget Review for any missing information/questions

The SB discussed various budget and accounting details.

8. New Business

A. Model VLCT Policy for Reserved/Rainy Day Fund

See 7.C. above.

B. Appointments / Reappointments for 2024

PM has contacted approximately 70% of the appointed and elected people; so far all are interested in continuing.

C. Elected positions - New Terms / positions open

See 8.B. above.

9. Reports and Updates

A. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

1) The fluctuating temperatures have caused mud season conditions on the roads. EMB has applied crushed gravel over a number of areas and used the grader to smooth road surfaces. He repaired areas damaged by erosion as well as wear and tear on Ellen Ware Road because of rerouting of traffic from an accident on Route 30.

2) Blocked the entry to the field on Grassy Brook Road to prevent damage from people driving on the field.

3) The Town truck has passed its inspection.

B. Planning Committee – S. Zwick

Tabled since there have been no meetings since the last update.

C. Energy Committee – S. Zwick

Tabled since there have been no meetings since the last update.

- D. Building Commissioner - B. Mello
 - 1) One of the heat pumps at the daycare building is malfunctioning. BM has called the installer and will continue to follow-up
 - 2) The Daycare has asked to have an ADA ramp installed at the back door. The SB noted that each level of the building already has ADA access, recommended further research about ADA requirements, and referred BM to the VLCT webpage for ADA guidance.
- E. Highway Grants & Contracts – S. Noga
 - 1) The Town has received a corrected version of the hydraulic report for Ellen Ware Road.
 - 2) SN will prepare a contract for the work to be completed by Carr Tree & Timber.
- F. Selectboard Chair - D. Maggio
 - 1) The Town received an updated assessment for the BMH along with a bill for the assessment – half of which is covered by a grant.
 - 2) Animal control update – missing horse and missing cat were reported.
 - 3) DM and SZ clarified the timeline for running payroll vs payment of payroll.
 - 4) DM contacted the auditors for the Town Report.
- G. Any other topic as requested by the selectboard not requiring a vote.
None.

10. Communications

- A. Emails
 - 1) VSNIP - Vermont Spay Neuter Incentive Program
They will provide \$27 reduced fee application forms for the Town.
 - 2) VEM Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Development Quarterly Reporting
Discussed above – see 6.G.
 - 3) VLCT & WRC email re: ARPA obligation deadline is December 31, 2024.
Discussed above – see 6.C.
- B. Regular Mail
None.

11. Set Agenda for the next meeting on January 17, 2024

- A. Set Agenda for Special MTAP public meeting/Date/Time TBD
- B. Finish budget discussion
- C. SB priority ARPA obligations
- D. FEMA update
- E. Set date/time for Special SB Meeting, late January to finish Town Report

12. Adjourn the Meeting

DM moved to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was **adjourned at 9:11 PM.**

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk