Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Present:

Selectboard (SB):	**Town Officers:**	**Public:**
Dorothy Maggio (DM) (Chair)	E Mark Bills (EMB) (Highway Supervisor)	FactTV online
Stanley Noga (SN) (Vice-Chair)	Guy Tanza (GT) (Town Clerk) (Zoom)	Lee Ann Parker (LAP)
Bruce Mello (BM)	Vanessa Ballou (VB) (Recording Clerk)	Francine Carr (FC)
Paul Madalinski (PM)		Timothy Carr (TC)
Somara Zwick (SZ)		Dan Towler (DT) (Zoon)
		Jon Ballou (JB) (Zoom)
		Helen Holt (HH) (Zoom)

1. **Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.**
2. **Any Changes to the Agenda**
   Correction to 9.A.1) which should refer to the July 2023 storm not 2024.
3. **Members of the Public**
   A. Scheduled members of the public
   Lee Ann Parker (LAP) Chair of the Brookline Meeting House (BMH) Committee presented the committee goals, priority list, funding needs, planning for the near future, and a timeline of recent activities that informed these matters. The Committee has consulted with several experts over the last couple of years. The recommendations have included painting, remediating the mold, sealing off sources of moisture, and obtaining additional scientific and architectural evaluations of the building. The BMH actually consists of two different buildings - the brick building and the wooden addition – each with a different set of challenges and approaches. The BMH Committee has identified the following priorities:
      1) Paint the steeple, front door, and shutters which has been funded and is awaiting final approval and contracting (budgeted at $17,000).
      2) Proceed with architectural scoping study for which MTAP funding may be available.
      3) Accept the building science consultant proposal to be completed by Peter Yost and Jon Saccoccio to provide an independent, scientific assessment of the source of the mold and potential remediation.
      4) Issue an RFP to have the wooden addition painted.

   LAP asked if the SB could approve the BMH committee to move forward with contracting with the building science consultants and preparing an RFP for painting the wooden addition. DM will add these items to the next meeting's agenda.

   B. Unscheduled members of the public
   None.

4. Review and Adopt Minutes

A. Regular Meeting Minutes – February 7, 2024

The SB reviewed the draft minutes dated February 7th. DM motioned to approve the minutes as presented; SN seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

5. Warrant Orders

A. Payroll Warrant

DM made a motion that the SB concur with her action of signing payroll warrant 2432 dated February 14, 2024 in the amount of $5,457.16; SN seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant

DM made a motion to approve accounts payable warrant 2433 dated February 21, 2024 in the amount of $6,592.89; SZ seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

A. Consideration/discussion/possible action on appropriating remaining ARPA funds

Following a discussion of the remaining ARPA funds. The SB agreed to table a final decision until after the Town Meeting when a new SB would be organized. SZ made a motion to table the decision regarding how to spend the ARPA funds until the new SB is formed; PM seconded. Four (DM, SN, PM, and SZ) voted in favor and 1 (BM) was opposed. The motion passed.

B. Consideration/discussion/possible action to approve budgeted spending by the Energy Committee.

The Energy Committee has received a mini grant of $4,000 from MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program). Funds can be spent on education and assessments such as for ADA, but funds cannot be used to buy equipment, and must be spent by the end of 2026. The Committee proposes to use these funds for the following:

1) Education – including education program materials, paid presenters; and purchase of a portable projector for community education.
2) Additional energy audit fees, for a blower test for Suzy's Little Peanuts, etc.
3) Assistance with grant applications for improvements once assessments are completed.

Costs are estimated to be no more than $4,000. SZ made a motion to allow the Energy Committee to spend the funds awarded from the MERP mini grant within the parameters of the grant requirements, not to exceed $4,000 in total, and also within the rules and procedures set forth with the Town's Purchase Policy. DM seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Consideration/discussion/possible action reviewing salary raises and retroactive pay to Listers. Policy on formalizing Human Resources Development & salary guide.

1) Retroactive pay due a lister

In follow-up to the February 7, 2024 SB Meeting, SZ informed the SB that Helen Holt (HH) was due $266.00 in retroactive pay for the raise she was previously awarded. DM made a motion to provide $266 dollars of pay to Helen Holt to compensate for the omission of the $1.00 an hour raise, retroactively; BM seconded. At SN's suggestion, DM amended the motion to have the SB authorize DM, the Chairperson, to sign on

behalf of the board for the retroactive pay of $266. The motion passed unanimously. DM signed the memo authorizing payment.

2) Town budgeted raises
SZ presented a memo that can be used to document pay raises. After the budget passes at the Town Meeting, the SB can complete and sign the pay raise documentation and provide it to the Town Treasurer.

Helen Holt (HH) joined the meeting and was informed of her retroactive pay; she remained at the meeting through the next two agenda items.

D. Cartographic Technologies - Computerized Mapping Program
Consideration/discussion/possible action to purchase the program.
HH explained that Cartographic Technologies, Inc. (CTI) does all the mapping for the Town. The fee of $450 is an annual fee that would be in addition to what the Town is paying to CTI and would allow the Town to see boundary updates done in real time rather than waiting for the yearly updates. DM recommended tabling this decision until April when new listers would be on board.

E. Discussion on hiring a reappraisal company - RFP development?
HH has reached out to reappraisal companies and nearby towns. She recommended that the Town issue an RFP and will provide a boilerplate RFP for these services.

F. Discussion on progress made with adjourning towns regarding shared services. (Townshend / Newfane / Athens)
The Towns of Athens and Newfane discussed shared services at their SB Meetings; these were attended by SN and DM and SN, respectively. The Towns have expressed interest but have also raised questions about how the arrangement would work and will take up their consideration after their respective Town Meetings.

G. Part time Administrative Assistant / Highway Helper positions
SZ distributed her draft advertisement for the positions to the SB and to EMB for discussion.

1) Administrative Assistant for the SB
The advertisement will run on Front Porch Forum, the Town's listserve, and the Brookline Facebook page.

2) Highway Helper
EMB announced that there is a potential candidate who has done this type of work for Townshend. He confirmed with the SB that the hourly rate would be $25.

H. Town Meeting - Setting up Multipurpose Room for Town Meeting
The SB will meet at 4:00 PM to set up for the Town Meeting.

I. Potluck Organization
As stated on the agenda the potluck will be from 5 PM to 6 PM in the back of the meeting room.

J. Carr Tree
DM received an email from Henry Carr informing her that they cannot provide tree removal service this winter. The SB and EMB will look into other options for this work.

7. New Business

A. Discussion: Road Projects - Photographs and GPS coordinates

FEMA requires photos and GPS coordinates to document storm damage. DM recommends that the Town purchase two tablets with cellular capabilities; one for EMB to use for the roads and a second one to be available as needed.

B. Discussion: Purchase tablets (cellular capabilities)
Commenting that tablets can be cumbersome to handle, GT recommended that the Town consider using phones with good photo capabilities. DM noted that tablets were recommended by Windham Regional but agreed that the Town needs to move forward with the best option so it has this capability. GT will consult with Dan Meehl on options.

C. Discussion: Purchase laptops
The Town's computers are 12 to 14 years old and there is money in the budget to replace them. The SB asked GT to research and purchase a laptop and additional CPUs for the Town. GT will work with Dan Meehl to identify the computers for purchase.

D. Discussion: Purchase computer CPUs for treasurers/listers/town clerk this year/next year
See above.

E. Discussion: select dates for quarterly Audits as recommended
The SB determined that the quarterly reviews should be 30 days after the taxes are paid – in March, June, September, and December.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills
The Town has experienced the equivalent of 4 – 5 mud seasons and these fluctuations between freezing and thawing have required more road materials and maintenance than usual. EMB reported work details on maintenance of the Town's equipment, the addition of LED lighting to the truck's headlights to improve night-time visibility, on-going monitoring and maintenance of roads and, replenishment of road materials. EMB discussed short term and longer-term needs for hydraulic hammer work; the SB asked for additional details. SN informed the group that the State will be painting road stripes sometime between April to October; the exact timing unknown.

There were brief discussions of grants. SN noted two considerations regarding potential TA60 grants: annual meeting to discuss the Town's needs and up-coming April 2024 deadline for next potential grant. EMB reported that the latest hydraulic study shows that the culvert at Kirsch and Hill Roads may be undersized and will need to be addressed. He also noted that the existing structure is a historical structure. The group agreed that additional research of the options is needed.

B. Building Commissioner - B. Mello
The MERP energy assessment of the day care building (Suzy's Little Peanuts) was completed. BM reported that the assessment was complete and very thorough. The report will be provided within a couple of weeks. Recommendations mentioned during the assessment included replacing the boiler and heater, increasing the insulation and ventilation in multiple areas, adding a generator, and adding window quilts.

The Town Office will be assessed next.

C. Highway Grants & Contracts – S. Noga

1) Pending Communications
SN is waiting to hear back from Chris Hunt regarding the salt and sand shed. The 2WiredGuys have signed and mailed their contract with the Town.

2) Contract Files
Copies of contracts are kept in two locations: Town Treasurer files and SB files. There is a question whether the files should be consolidated. There is an audit coming up by VLTC regarding workman's compensation. Any outstanding contracts need to be filed in both places.

3) FEMA Narrative
SN is working on a narrative regarding the storm damage on Grassy Brook Road near the Schoener and Slater properties. FEMA has requested an update on what the Town is doing regarding mitigation scenarios for the sites on Hill Road and Ellen Ware Road – specifically what the cost is of returning the roads to their previous condition and the cost of mitigation.

4) Revised Flood Maps
The Town will be receiving updated flood maps and needs to confirm their accuracy by March 18th. SN is working on the Town's response.

D. Selectboard Chair - D. Maggio
Covered above under agenda item 7.

E. Any other topic as requested by the selectboard not requiring a vote.
PM is working on the E911 map and needs to complete a review of the 911 locations on Merrill Drive and Bush Lane.

9. Communications

DM summarized the communications listed below.

A. Emails

1) FEMA Category A and FEMA Category B costs are approved at 100% for the July 2024 storm – communicated by an email from Kim Canarecci. The Town has no Category A roads.
2) Carr Tree cannot complete the tree removal project.
3) JRP and FEMA Assistance consultant information from Kim Canarecci.
The Town can hire a consultant to do the Town's FEMA work if the costs are 5% or less of the Category B reimbursement.
4) WRC sent an invitation to the Planning Commission Chairs for Towns abutting the Town of Winhall (Dummerston/Westminster/Brookline) for Town Plan Review scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 6:30 PM on zoom. The SB determined that this does not apply to Brookline; the Town is not adjacent to the Town of Winhall.
5) VLCT Workmen's Compensation Audit for non-employee vendors in process.
6) Vulnerable Populations Phone Tree is to be disbanded in favor of CARES (Citizens Assistance Registry for Emergencies). DM will bring forms for VT-Alert and CARES to the Town Meeting for interested parties to sign up.
7) Maggie Foley re: BMH scope of work request, does Brookline need culvert engineering studies - discussed earlier.

B. Regular Mail

1) The Town received the West River Modified Union Education Annual Report.
2) DM received a cloud service agreement for $1,968.80 for the Town's accounting work. Following clarification with SZ, DM signed the agreement.

10. **Set Agenda for the next meeting on Wednesday, March 6, 2024**
    A. Reorganization Meeting on Wednesday March 6, 2024
    B. BMH request to accept the building science consultant proposal (Peter Yost and Jon Saccoccio)
    C. BMH request to issue an RFP for painting the wooden addition
11. **Adjourn the Meeting**

    DM and SN and BM expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the contributions of Somara Zwick and Paul Madalinsky who jumped in and joined the SB last year; they will not be continuing on the SB.

    DM moved to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was **adjourned at 9:18 PM**.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk