Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Present:

Selectboard (SB):	**Town Officers:**	**Public:**
Dorothy Maggio (DM) (Chair)	E Mark Bills (EMB) (Highway Supervisor)	FactTV online
Stanley Noga (SN) (Vice-Chair)	Vanessa Ballou (VB) (Recording Clerk)	At Town Office:
Bruce Mello (BM)		Lee Ann Parker (LAP)
Michael DeSocio (MD)		Via Zoom:
Doug Wellman (DW)		Dan Towler (DT)
		Jon Ballou (JB)
		Leah Daly (LD)

1. **Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.**
2. **Review / Approve Minutes**
   A. Regular meeting minutes – April 17, 2024
   The SB reviewed the draft minutes dated April 17, 2024. DM motioned to approve the minutes from Wednesday, April 17th with one edit as noted for item 7. D. 1); BM seconded; the motion approved unanimously. Note that during the review of the minutes, there was an update regarding the engineering study approved for the Grassy Brook and Parker Roads site: the study was not funded (item 3. A. 3 on page 2).
   B. Town Meeting Minutes / Submitted by G. Tanza
   The SB reviewed the draft annual Brookline Town Meeting Minutes. DM motioned to accept the meeting minutes from the Monday, March 4, 2024 Town Meeting with the correction on page 2 that SN nominated MD; MD seconded; motion approved by four of the five SB members, with SN abstaining.
3. **Members of the Public**
   A. Scheduled members of the public
      1) Lee Ann Parker (LAP), Chair of the Brookline Meeting House
         - Status of the Mold Study – Saccoccio & Yost
           MD has reviewed the proposal provided and incorporated the Town details and contract language and identified changes to the Saccoccio proposal. Once SN and MD have finalized the document and it is ready to go back for final review and approval by Jon Saccoccio, the SB concurs with having MD finalize with SN the updated contract to send back to the vendor.
         - Status of the Saccoccio Feasibility Study
           DM confirmed that since the cost is over $2,500 a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain additional bids must be produced.

- Bell Tower Painting
  The bid from 802 Painting is still on hold because the Town is waiting for receipt of his lead certification. LAP, expressing concern about the delay, noted that some of the wood on the BMH is 120 years old and is not protected by a coat of paint.
- Village Trust Initiative
  LAP summarized the scope of this new community trust project. The trust has total funding of $10,000,000 to invest in Vermont community development. The application process is started by submitting an intake form which is due by May 24th, 2024. LAP believes that the BMH is well positioned to qualify for funding under the trust project. The SB agreed to have the BMH Committee submit an intake form to begin the process.

B. Unscheduled members of the public on Agenda items only
Leah Daly attended via Zoom to discuss grants for upsizing the culverts. A grant has been approved for $10,000 with the Town responsible for an additional 25%. DM recommended that the SB schedule a special meeting next week to talk about all current issues concerning Brookline's highways and culverts. The SB agreed to meet again on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM to discuss.

4. Changes to the Agenda

DM made the following motion.

"As Chair of the Brookline Selectboard, I am going to make a motion to enter into an executive session after setting the agenda for the May 15th meeting. I find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body at a substantial disadvantage. Citing 1. V.S.A. 313 (1) (B), specifically labor relations agreements with new employees. No other matter will be considered in the executive session. No formal or binding action shall be taken in executive session. This will be a very brief executive session." BM seconded the motion; approved unanimously.

5. Unfinished Business - ACTION = Motion/Seconded/Discussion/Vote or Table

A. Vermont Arts Council Cultural Facilities Grant Program
DM made a motion to support the Building Commissioner filing for a grant with the Vermont Arts Council Cultural Facilities grant program. This matching grant will be to cover the cost of insulating the Brookline Meeting House addition. The application is due May 6, 2024. There is no fee for it. Motion seconded by BM.

BM is pulling together the grant application and is requesting approval to submit. He explained that the grant would provide 50% of the cost of insulating the BMH addition (floor, ceiling, and walls). The estimated cost of insulating the addition is approximately $20,000. Both BMH members present questioned why insulating the addition was selected for the grant as it is not on the current priority list for the addition – although they agreed that insulating should be done in the future. DW recommended that the group finalize a good priority list before any funds are spent. Following the discussion, DM repeated the motion and asked for a vote. DM and BM voted in favor, SN and DW voted against, and MD abstained; the motion did not pass.

B. Retirement of Judy Acampora as Assistant Treasurer
DM made a motion for the SB to accept with regret the retirement of Judy Acampora as Assistant Treasurer for the Town of Brookline effective immediately; SN seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

C. Review of Bank Reconciliation Reports.
DM made a motion to appoint an SB member to review bank reconciliation reports of the Treasurer for transparency; SN seconded. During the discussion DM explained that Melissa Brown will take over most of Judy Acampora's responsibilities, but she cannot sign checks and also review bank reconciliation reports. Noting that Somara Zwick was appointed as another Assistant Treasurer so that she could sign checks, DM motioned to table this motion until DM has an opportunity to talk with Somara Zwick. SN seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

D. Town of Brookline's Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)
DM made a motion to accept the Town of Brookline's Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) as presented for the year 2024; SN seconded. DM summarized minor changes requested by Windham Regional to the version she had previously distributed to the SB. She also requested additional details from some of the SB members. DM made a motion that the SB approve the LEMP for the Town of Brookline as modified. The motion approved unanimously.

E. Employee & Stipend Rates Effective Date
DM made a motion to approve the Employee & Stipend Rates to be effective starting July 1, 2024 not July 1, 2025 as stated on the form; BM seconded; motion approved unanimously.

F. Category Z Administrative Work Hourly Pay Rate
DM made a motion to update the $21.75 per hour pay rate to $23.00 per hour retroactively from July 1, 2023 for the Category Z Administrative work for the FEMA Disaster #4720 so that it is consistent with the approved pay rate of the Treasurer. (This expense is 100% reimbursable). Starting July 1, 2024 the rate will again increase to $24.00 per hour to be consistent with salary rates of the Treasurer. BM seconded. DM explained that the Treasurer, who does a lot of the FEMA administrative work, cannot work at an hourly rate below her contracted hourly rate. The motion approved unanimously.

G. Transfer Expenses from One Budget Line Item to Another
DM made a motion to transfer $1,309.00, which is the amount paid for the new laptops, originally voted to be paid from the Administrative Assistant Line Item to be moved to the Town Computer Equipment Line Item as requested by the Treasurer for transparency; SN seconded; the motion approved unanimously.

H. Policy Review: Discussion only
DM explained that most of the policies were old and have not been updated. The SB discussed the following:
1) Any changes/discussion on the current Purchase Policy?
2) Any changes/discussion on the current Conflict of Interest Policy?
3) Any changes/discussion on the current Selectboard Rules of Procedure Policy?
4) Any changes/discussion on the current Town Use Office Policy?

The SB did not identify changes to be made to any of the policies. The policies will be readopted as presented at the next regular SB meeting and then posted on the Town website.

I. ArborClimb
ArborClimb provided two revised proposals and estimated costs for hazardous tree removal work in the Town of Brookline. Both proposals were within the previously approved budget amount. Following a discussion of the revised bids, SN made a motion that the Town of Brookline approve the three-man option at the hourly rate of $145 per man per hour to do the 6 to 8 hour work for the day for the total cost not to exceed $3,480; DM seconded; motion approved unanimously.

J. FEMA visit update from Friday April 19th
The meeting with FEMA was attended by SB members, the Town Treasurer, and a resident. The Town has a new FEMA contact; her name is Star Staley. The Town is scheduling a meeting for Friday, May 3rd.

K. MTAP- Update: Municipal Technical Assistance Program tabled last meeting
Following her meeting with members of the SB and the BMH committee, Maggie Foley and Matt Bachler drafted grant applications for the BMH ($36,100) and the Planning ($20,880) Committees. The applications have been submitted and decisions are expected in May.

L. Green Up Day
Residents have started with Green Up efforts. Green Up signs are on display and bags are available on the signs.

6. New Business

A. Review RFP for Town Wide Reappraisal as prepared by the Listers
With the current estimated cost of reappraisals at $120 per property parcel, the cost of having the Town's 320 parcels is estimated to be $39,480. The Town has a fund, which took 17 years to raise, that will just cover this. The state is now asking that reappraisals be done every 5 to 7 years. DM will put approval of the RFP on the agenda for the May 15th.

B. Additional Staffing needs -Discussion
Tabled for discussion during the Executive Session at the end of the meeting.

C. Southern Vermont Conservation Manager for Vermont River Conservancy- Hayley Kolding re: Brookline's experience with rivers and how this fits into town planning. Offer to meet as a resource.
The SB will invite Hayley Kolding to the June 19, 2024 SB meeting. The Town's Planning Committee will also be invited to attend.

7. Reports and Updates

A. Highway Supervisor - E. Mark Bills
EMB cleaned and scraped roads that were closed for the winter season. The grater tires are pretty worn and will need replacing. EMB summarized costs and options for replacing the tires. The SB will discuss in greater detail at the May 7th Special SB Meeting.

A resident has offered to donate some large rocks/boulders to keep cars off the playing field on Grassy Brook Road. EMB requested that a gate with a lock be purchased by the Town to allow the field mowers and others to have access to the field. The SB agreed to the purchase of a 12-foot-wide access gate at a price not to exceed $150.

B. Selectboard Chair - D. Maggio

1) DM reported that she worked with the Deputy Sheriff from the Windham County Sheriff's Office twice this past week to address animal control issues. DM was very pleased to be accompanied by the Deputy Sheriff and impressed with her professionalism, the kindness she showed to the residents, and her thoroughness.
2) DM attended a ZOOM meeting regarding shared services.

C. Grants/Contracts - S. Noga

Design Services Agreements for Repairs

SN summarized the agreements provided for the repairs to be done at Hill and Kirsch Roads and Ellen Ware Road. SN has questions regarding details of the described scope of work and potential total costs since not all costs were included in the estimate. He is planning to have a follow-up call with Mr. Hammon this week, and the SB will discuss it in further detail during the Special Meeting on May 7th.

D. Building Commissioner - B. Mello

While acknowledging that he and the BMH Committee needed to work more closely together, BM expressed disappointment that his grant application to the Vermont Arts Council Cultural Facilities grant program to fund insulating the addition of the BMH was not approved for filing. He felt that the likelihood of being awarded the grant was high, that insulating the addition is important, and that obtaining grants from the Vermont Arts Council has been overlooked as a funding source.

He also discussed the cost of the Saccoccio Feasibility Study. He believes that many of the costs included in the Feasibility Study are not necessary or can be completed at lower cost or for free. DW agreed that the feasibility costs are high and even with a grant, the BMH will need to provide some percentage of matching funds. MD commented that the results of the study and the detailed plans from an independent source may be useful to get funding.

E. Any other discussion as requested by a selectboard member which does not require a vote.

DM will sign the agreement provided for the Windham County Humane Society for $325.

8. Warrant Orders

A. Payroll Warrant

DM made a motion that the SB concur with her action of signing 2024 payroll warrant 24-42 dated April 24, 2024 in the amount of $ $2,911,57; DW seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant

DM made a motion to approve accounts payable warrant 24-43 dated May 2, 2024 in the amount of $887.85; SN seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Communications

DM summarized the communications listed below.

A. Regular Mail

Letter from Vermont Land Trust 4.25.24 RE: Acquisition of Development Rights from the Board of the Green Mountain Conservancy Incorporated amending the original grant to include conserving 49 acres in Brookline.

The grant is available upon request and will be sent to the Brookline Town Clerk for recording immediately following the closing.

B. Email

1) Email from Hayley Kolding Conservation Manager for Southern Vermont
   Discussed above.

10. Set Agenda for the next meeting on Wednesday, May 15, 2024

A. Adopt amended Policies upon second reading:
   1) Purchase Policy
   2) Conflict of Interest Policy
   3) Selectboard Rules of Procedure Policy
   4) Town Use Office Policy

B. Policy Review/Update
   1) Minimum Road Specifications Policy
   2) Driveway Culvert Policy
   3) Identity Theft Prevention Policy
   4) Excess Weight use on roads and bridges Policy…

C. Brookline Meeting House Update

D. Village Trust Initiative

E. RFP Development for BMH

11. Executive Session

DM made a motion to enter into an executive session for the reasons described above under agenda item 4. Changes to the Agenda. The SB entered into the executive session at 9:25 PM, FactTV recording was turned off, and EMB and VB were excused from the SB meeting. No actions, motions, or votes took place during the executive session. The SB exited the executive session at 9:37 PM.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

DM moved to adjourn the SB meeting which was **adjourned at 9:37 PM**.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk