Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Present:

Selectboard (SB):	**Town Officers:**	**Public:**
Stanley Noga (SN) Vice-Chair	E Mark Bills (EMB) Highway Supervisor	FactTV
Bruce Mello (BM)	Vanessa Ballou (VB) Recording Clerk	Win Clark (WC)
Michael DeSocio (MD)		Lee Anne Parker (LAP)
Doug Wellman (DW)		Oliver Ames (OA)
		Somara Zwick (SZ)
		Via Zoom:
		Jon Ballou (JB)
		Dan Towler (DT)

1. **Stan Noga called the meeting to order at 6:36.**
   Dorothy Maggio, SB Chair, was not present at the meeting. Somara Zwick joined the meeting at 6:50 PM.
2. **Review/Approve Draft Minutes**
   A. Regular Meeting Wednesday September 4, 2024 Minutes
   SN motioned to approve the minutes from the SB Meeting of Wednesday, September 4 as presented, MD seconded; motion approved unanimously.
   B. Special Limited Agenda Meeting Wednesday August 29, 2024 Minutes
   Previously approved during September 4th meeting.
   C. Zoom Call with Saccoccio and Yost Tuesday, September 3, 2024 Minutes
   VB plans to complete these minutes sometime this week to be reviewed at the next SB meeting.
3. **Changes to the Agenda**
   During the meeting, SB approval of RFPs (Request for Proposals) for the Brookline Meeting House (BMH) was moved from agenda item 6. New Business to agenda item 5. A. Scheduled Members of the Public.
4. **Open Bids**
   A. Open Bid(s) for Snow Plowing Winter 2024-2025
   The Town received one bid - from A.S. Clark for $50,000. SN made a motion to accept the bid from A.S. Clark for snow plowing, sanding, and salting in the amount of $50,000 payable from January through April in four $12,500 payments; DW seconded. During the discussion, the MD noted that the $50,000 bid represents a 19% increase over this past year. Win Clark explained that the costs were due to increased costs of materials. DW informed the SB that the Town will not need to plow the quarter mile to the new house being built on Ellen Ware Road. Following the discussion the SB voted unanimously to accept the bid.

B. Open Bid(s) for Winter Road Sand Material

The Town received one bid from A.S. Clark. SN made a motion to accept the bid for sand at $30.00 per yard; DW seconded. During the discussion, the SB noted that the cost represents an increase of $2.00 per yard compared with the past winter season. Following the discussion the SB voted unanimously to accept the bid.

5. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled members of the public

1) Somara Zwick – Energy Committee Update

SZ summarized where the Town stood with MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program). In the first stage of the program, the Town Office and daycare building (Suzy's Little Peanuts) underwent an energy assessment/audit. SZ has distributed the energy assessment reports. The Town was awarded a $4,000 education grant from the first stage of the MERP that the Town will use for community education.

In mid-September, the Energy Committee was informed that the two buildings are deemed eligible for a grant that could provide up to $400,000 to implement energy savings identified in the energy assessments. DW made a motion to authorize the Energy Committee to go ahead with an application; BM seconded. The application period closes September 27th, the Town would be informed by October 25th, and grant agreements would need to be signed by the end of November, 2024. If the Town does not like the terms of the grant or the match requirement, the Town could refuse the grant. Without making a formal vote, none of the SB members objected to having the Energy Committee proceed with the grant.

2) Lee Anne Parker (LAP)

The SB received two draft RFPs: one for the underground roof and the other for the scraping and priming of the south side of the annex.

a. RFP Draft Structural Engineer for BMH

Not discussed.

b. RFP Draft - Underground Roof for BMH

LAP read the draft RFP, and the group discussed changes. BM asked that Archie Clark (AC) be involved in the discussion and decisions regarding installation of the underground roof. The RFP will be finalized and then advertised with RFP's to be opened at the October 16th SB Meeting and AC will be invited to the meeting. SN made a motion to approve the RFP for the underground roof with changes discussed; MD seconded; the SB voted unanimously to approve the RFP.

c. RFP Draft - Scraping/Prime South Side of Annex

LAP read the draft RFP, and the group discussed planning and wording changes. SN made a motion to approve the RFP as amended during the discussion for scraping and priming the south side of the BMH annex; MD seconded. Three of the SB Members voted in favor (SN, MD, DW), one (BM) voted against, the motion passed.

d. RFP Draft – Roof Repair - Ridge Cap, Slate repair/replacement, Cap 2 chimneys.

Not discussed.

LAP said that the BMH Committee will not be able to use all the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) by the end of the year on the projects listed above. She identified additional items that the BMH needed for other projects. BM suggested that that the group produce a list for discussion at a future SB Meeting.

B. Unscheduled members of the public

1) Oliver Ames (OA) attended the meeting to discuss the locked gate at the Windmill Hill Trailhead. OA recommends more informative signage at this entry to the trail to inform trail users about the trail conditions and to instruct drivers not to block access by parking in front of the gate. OA informed the SB that the lock has been removed. SN recommended that the topic of the gate at the Brookline end of the Windmill Hill trailhead be included in the agenda for the October 2nd meeting; MD seconded; and all members of the SB agreed.

2) Win Clark (WC)
Win Clark announced that Rescue Inc is having their annual meeting on Sunday, September 22nd at 8 PM.

6. New Business

A. FEMA reporting options: Streamlined process with risk-based approach rather than full documentation review. S. Noga
Action : Shall the town of Brookline participate in the recommended streamlined process with FEMA for Ellen Ware Road and Hill Road repair projects currently being engineered.

SN described the FEMA streamlined process for applying for grants. The program has a reduced paper-work burden and allows towns to access the FEMA money earlier instead of after all the work has been completed. FEMA has asked the Town to respond with cost estimates no later than October 15th, 2024 if interested in this process for those projects. SN made a motion to have the Town proceed with the streamlined process; DW seconded. SN provided additional details concerning the process and benefits. DW asked what the Town match would be and questioned whether it would be more economical for the Town to do some remediation and repairs using time-tested approaches without the requirement for engineering studies. MD suggested that in the future the Town make comparisons of costs of FEMA's vs the Town's process. Following the discussion, the SB voted unanimously to move forward with an application to the streamlined process.

B. Action: RFP for BMH Structural Engineer to be advertised
SN motioned to table to next meeting; MD seconded; motion approved unanimously.

C. Action: RFP for BMH Underground Roof to be advertised
See 5. A. 2) b.

D. Action: RFP for BMH Painting of the Annex to be advertised
See 5. A. 2) c.

E. Action: RFP for BMH Roof Ridge cap, slate, cap chimneys to be advertised.
SN motioned to table to next meeting; MD seconded; motion approved unanimously.

F. What date shall all requests for appropriations be received by this fall 2024 for the 2025-26 town budget vote in March 2025?
The SB discussed the details behind this request, SN motioned to change the receipt of appropriation requests from October to November. However, none of the other SB Members

were willing to second the motion; the motion died. The date for receipt of appropriation requests will remain as October 31st.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Flood Plain Administrator - Job description and Pay/Stipend and where to advertise
SN motioned to table this topic; BM seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

B. Grant Writer - Job description and Pay / Stipend.
SN motioned to table this topic; MD seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

8. Reports / Updates

A. Highway Supervisor - E. Mark Bills

1) Culvert repairs/replacement since last meeting
EMB replaced culverts that were identified as top priority and were best replaced before winter – including an Athens Road culvert upgraded to 2 feet approximately 40 feet long culvert and an under sized, rusted metal culvert on Parker Road which was replaced with an 18-inch culvert. He will continue to check roads and apply gravel as needed to prepare the roads for winter weather. He met with Lisa Donnelly regarding an updated inventory of all the roads and looked for road erosion that would need to be addressed in road segments next year.

EMB asked the SB if he could address the culvert on Ellen Ware Road just past the last house; the SB did not object to having it replaced. And the highway budget will cover the cost.

2) Hazard Mitigation History of culvert #35 at Grassy Brook and Parker Road
EMB and SN met regarding the Parker Road culvert.

3) Hazardous Tree Removal Grants
EMB is looking into a potential grant, for which no town match is required, that would fund hazardous tree removal.

4) Road Salt Prices
DM requested salt bids from Cargill and American Rock Salt. Cargill's bid was $86.75 per ton. EMB estimated that the Town has 15 to 20 yards of salt.

B. Grants - S. Noga

1) GIA 2024 headwall work near 6 Parker Road
Lisa Donnelly from WRC (Windham Regional Commission) will need to decide where to delineate the Town's right-of-way since it is not clear from the deed. It's not possible for the entire length of the culvert to fit within the Town's right-of-way, so WRC will need to determine where the Town's responsibility ends and where the resident's responsibility begins.

2) Grant writer position
SN sent an email to a Brookline resident who has grant writing experience to see if they would be interested.

3) Hazard Mitigation Update with VEM (Vermont Emergency Management)
WRC has asked the Town to get a breakdown of costs for the $350,000 estimate and to get a second estimate. The Town is to get an estimate for the route recommended by the H&H Study as well as an estimate for the next best route recommended by the H&H Study. The SB is to provide these estimates and details by mid-October.

C. Finance – M. DeSocio
   1) Treasurer's report
      The Town is still wrapping up reporting for 2023/24.
   2) Delinquent Taxes.
      The total has decreased to $10,000.

D. Building Commissioner - B. Mello
   1) Researching handyman services for small projects
      BM met with Chris Cleverly (Cleverly Home Repairs) to discuss the Town's building needs. They visited the BMH and discussed potential renovations and changes to make the building ADA compliant, better insulated, etc.
   2) Brookline Meeting House & ARPA Fund obligation deadline
      BM will provide a list of projects that could be funded with the ARPA Fund by the meeting on October 16th.

E. Selectboard Chair - D. Maggio
   1) Written summary provided to the SB as DM was not be present at this meeting.
      - Front Porch Forum has given Brookline its own page.
      - Jon Saccoccio has provided an amended report to provide additional details about the foundation work already done.
      - October budget planning to begin.

F. Any other discussion as requested by a selectboard member not requiring a vote
   BM reported that Alyssa Schmidt did an outstanding job with organizing and publicizing the meeting with the Town residents and the Town's legislative representatives. The turnout was good, and the interaction was informative. BM recommended that the meeting be repeated, held at a different time from the Town meeting.

9. Warrants

A. Payroll Warrant
   SN made a motion to approve payroll warrant 25-11 in the amount of $2,109.42; BM seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant
   SN made a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant 25-12 in the amount of $326,004.52; MD seconded the motion. This warrant includes the education taxes. The motion was approved unanimously.

10. Communications

The SB briefly reviewed the following communications.

A. Regular Mail
   1) Sent: Letter to O. Ames @872 GBR & D. Stolpp @868 GRB re: unauthorized installation of a locked gate at the Windmill Hill Trailhead between their two properties.
   2) Sent: To RESCUE Inc. re: Doug Wellman Appointment
   3) Sent: To Windham Regional Commission re: Doug Wellman Appointment
   4) Sent: To M. Worden re: recorded dog bite incident

B. Email
   1) Received: Road Commissioner Archie Clark re: Hazard Mitigation History of culvert #35 at Grassy Brook Road and Parker Road.

2) Received: Treasurer Melissa Brown re: depositing approx $193,000.00 from FEMA w/ note re: FEMA 4720 projects that need to be funded.
3) Received: Land Use Permit Amendment dated Sept 9, 2024 re: Case No: 2W1152-6 Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association from District 2 Environmental Commission for approx. 10,555 linear feet of hiking trails (2 feet in width) and a trail head with parking area and kiosk. Located at 466 Brookline Road in Athens VT & Grassy Brook Road in Brookline VT.
4) Received: Fully executed contract for property reassessment w/ New England Municipal Resource Center (NEMRC) for all real property in Brookline
5) Received: Municipal Energy Resilience Program Implementation Grants - MERP - Energy Committee requesting funds for projects noted in the assessment report.
6) Received: Meg Stoloft has requested to speak at the October 2, 2024 SB meeting re: BDCC (Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation) for about 5 minutes
7) SENT - Winter road salt bids requested from Cargill and American Rock Salt companies for approx 175 Tons of winter material.

11. Set Agenda for the next meeting on Wednesday, October 2 18, 2024

A. Meg Stoloft – BDCC - member of the public scheduled
B. BMH Bids - review/open/award
C. Winter Road Salt Bids - review/open/award
D. Energy Committee Grant Application
E. Windmill Hill Trailhead

12. Adjourn the Meeting

SN moved to adjourn the meeting, and the meeting was **adjourned at 9:22 PM**.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk