Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

Present:

Selectboard (SB):	**Town Officers:**	**Public:**
Dorothy Maggio (DM) Chair	E Mark Bills (EMB) Highway Supervisor	FactTV
Stanley Noga (SN) Vice-Chair		
Bruce Mello (BM)		
Michael DeSocio (MD)		
Doug Wellman (DW)		

1. **Dorothy Maggio called the meeting to order at 6:35 and introduced attendees.**
   Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk, was not present at the meeting.
2. **Review/Approve Draft Minutes**
   A. Regular Meeting Wednesday August 21, 2024 Minutes
   DM motioned to approve the minutes as presented from Wednesday, August 21, 2024; MD seconded; motion approved unanimously.
   B. Special Meeting Thursday August 29, 2024 Minutes
   DM motioned to approve the minutes from Thursday, August 29, 2024 limited agenda SB Meeting as presented; BM seconded; motion approved unanimously by the three SB Members (DM, SN, and BM) present at the August 29th meeting with MD and DW abstaining.
3. **Changes to the Agenda**
   DM added signing the reappraisal contract which was previously approved by the SB under 6. Unfinished Business.
4. **Members of the Public**
   A. Scheduled members of the public
   None.
   B. Unscheduled members of the public
   None.
5. **New Business**
   A. ACTION: Application for Request to Cater Permit License has been submitted to the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery, Division of Liquor Control (DLC) for serving alcohol at the Dutton Wedding located at 872 Grassy Brook Road - Application # 47719. SB Action needed to be recorded by the Town Clerk in the DLL Portal.

   DM made a motion to approve the application for the catering permit license that was submitted to the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery; DLC for serving alcohol at the Dutton Wedding. MD seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. DM will instruct the Town Clerk to record the vote in the portal.

B. Planning Commission Chair

DM made a motion to have her send an email to authorize and to instruct the Planning Commission to elect a Chair and/or Chair and Co-Chair for the remainder of the year; SN seconded. The Commission has been operating with a rotational chair as no one is interested in being the permanent chair. SN said that he was willing to step forward as the Chair, while acknowledging that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) discourages having SB Members chair other Town Committees or Commissions. SN would welcome a Co-Chair. He also reported that Jon Harris will participate as a consultant. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

Nominations for new appointments - ACTION

A. Windham Regional Commission (WRC)

DM asked if there were any nominations for the Town's second representative to the WRC. DW volunteered to be the additional representative; SN seconded the nomination. DM made a motion to appoint DW as a representative to the WRC alongside SN. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Planning Commission

SN concurred with DM's suggestion that the Town should look for additional members for the Planning Commission; SN offered to send out a notice via the Town's Listserv.

C. Flood Plains Administrator

DM asked the SB Members to consider whether the Flood Plains Administrator should be a volunteer or a paid position; whether the Town should require certification or pay for certification training; and how the SB want to approach this position for the benefit of the Town. DM asked for nominations. SN suggested that a notice be placed on the Town's Listserv. Members of the SB felt that the Town should pay for any training needed and that the position should be paid given the nature and scope of responsibilities and for retention. The Town discussed looking for a Flood Plains Administrator at a nearby town who could also serve Brookline. SN offered to prepare a job description. Once the job description is completed and payment determined, the job can be advertised. Appointing a Flood Plains Administrator was tabled again.

D. RESCUE Inc.

RESCUE Inc has asked the Town to send a representative to attend a meeting at VEMSA (Vermont EMS Academy) on Route 30 in Newfane on Sunday, September 22nd at 4 PM. DM asked for a nomination for a representative for RESCUE Inc to attend their monthly meetings. DW volunteered to be the representative – although he is not available for the September meeting; SN agreed to cover for him. DM motioned to appoint DW as the representative to RESCUE Inc; MD seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

E. Contract with NEMRC (New England Municipal Resource Center)

DM asked the SB Members to sign the approved contract with NEMRC for the Town-wide property reappraisals.

7. Reports / Updates

A. Highway Supervisor - E. Mark Bills

EMB reported that he has caught up with the mowing, has applied gravel on Town roads, has graded roads, put culverts in on the Athens Road, and has two more culverts to install. The

Culvert Update Report is updated to reflect the culvert replacements. EMB has identified additional culverts that will need replacement. The SB discussed timelines, budgets, and potential grants for addressing the additional culverts as well as the ones not covered by this year's GIA (Grants in Aid). EMB reminded the SB about the availability of Better Back Roads grants.

ArborClimb came to Brookline and worked on trees. In their allotted time, they were not able to cut down all the flagged trees.

Regarding the request EMB made at the last meeting for a credit card for highway department purchases, DM suggested that he go through Guy Tanza, Town Clerk, to order highway tools.

EMB reported that there was a problem with the grader, and it has been fixed with a replacement part.

B. Grants/FEMA - S. Noga

Lisa Donnelly from WRC confirmed that the five culverts which were included among this year's GIA road segments, but which the Town was not able to complete can be transferred to next year's GIA without any written submission. There is a meeting Friday with Star Staley regarding the status of work being done by Everett Hammond on Ellen Ware Road and Kirsch Road. SN noted that the Town has received the $184,816.90 FEMA reimbursement. SN still needs to do research regarding the Grant Administrator position.

C. Finance – M. DeSocio

1) MD and Melissa Brown are working on the quarterly budget presentation for the Town's operating costs – using the same approach as for the highway budget described at the previous SB meeting.
2) The SB discussed details regarding the $184,816.90 FEMA reimbursement: from where in the highway budget the Town's spending came from, whether the paving budget could be funded, whether a special article will be needed at the Town meeting.

D. Building Commissioner - B. Mello

BM reported that the total budget to date for the BMH is $60,601.92, including the ARPA money. BM has made an appointment to have Servpro come to the Town Office on August 22nd so they can prepare cost estimates for dealing with mice in the Town Office and the bat guano in the BMH steeple.

1) Summary of Q & A Zoom with authors of the BMH Mold/Moisture report.
   BM focused on the following topics discussed during the call: lack of humidity measurements from the sanctuary public area, condition of the foundation timbers, moisture barrier, the underground roof, and requirements for a structural engineer (with a potential cost of $4,000 to $6,000) to examine the foundation timbers. To reduce moisture inside the BMH, steps need to be taken to reduce the incursion of moisture. BM recommends purchasing a device for measuring humidity to monitor the sanctuary and the crawl space as well as installing a dehumidifier in the crawl space. He added that the underground roof is a great idea.
2) September 9 meeting w/ BMH Committee to discuss next steps
   BM reviewed comments he has received on the priority plan he shared with the BMH Committee for renovations.

3) Plumbing needs at SLP (Suzy's Little Peanuts) Daycare
The drainage problem at the daycare building appears to be fixed. The SB agreed that the bill from the plumber who worked on the clogged toilet should be paid. BM will ask Marjorie Ray to pay the plumber's invoice.

E. Selectboard Chair - D. Maggio
1) Stray Dog / Bears at large
There have been reports of roaming dogs and bears; the Brookline Facebook page has photos and additional details.
2) Reappraisal has started
They started with Parker Road and will go down Grassy Brook Road next.
3) Aug 31 - jogger bitten by dog
On August 31st, a jogger on Brookline Road was bitten by a dog. The Animal Control Officer from Brattleboro will do a site visit. The dog is licensed, has received rabies shots, and is currently in quarantine.
4) Meeting with BMH Committee on September 9
The SB is invited to a meeting at the BMH from 5:00 to 6:15 PM.
5) Requirements for Posting Meeting Agendas
DM asked that SB Members not participate in meetings unless they know that the meeting agenda has been posted as required - at the three designated Town locations, 48 hours in advance of the meeting. There is a new $500 fine for not abiding by this regulation.
6) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan has been successfully received by VEM (Vermont Emergency Management) for their review which may take 6 to 12 weeks.
7) Culvert Replacement List
The list is to ensure that the Town is following a systematic plan and is tracking culverts submitted in various grants.
8) Review communications/emails below

F. Any other discussion as requested by a selectboard member not requiring a vote
BM asked about the outstanding delinquent taxes totaling $35,000.

8. Warrants

A. Payroll Warrant
No payroll warrant was available for approval.

B. Accounts Payable Warrant
DM made a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant 25-10 dated September 5th, 2024 in the amount of $8,726.39; SN seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Communications

A. Regular Mail
1) Reappraisal Postcards have been sent.
2) FEMA reimbursement checks received for 2021

B. Email
1) Margo Ghia - RE: no MERP funding beyond initial $4,000.00 grant for education.
2) Margo Ghia - WRC - RE: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan has successfully been received by VEM for their review - August 26th

3) DLL Application # 47719 for Dutton Wedding
4) Town Forrest Census Email received from Town Clerk on August 29th due August 30th
5) ENDYNE Inc. Nitrate water testing at SLP Daycare was completed and no issues were reported.
6) Request to identify a chair of the Brookline Planning Commission
7) Request from Townshend SB Assistant to answer questions on the following topics: Website development/management, Computer IT services, laptop use by SB members, Grant writing, transfer station, Equipment Depreciation and maintenance schedules, Law enforcement. DM will contact VLCT regarding such shared services.
8) Declaration of Inclusion Initiative Survey – completed
9) New Grant for Hazardous Tree removal - information received
10) Severe Weather Feedback Survey request was received by the Town on September 4th. The Town is requested to complete this survey by November 1, 2024 even if it was not affected by this summer's storms.
11) DM reported that two residents near the gate at the Windmill Hill Trail installed the gate and lock two years ago after 6 cars, trucks, and jeeps arrived in the middle of the night and trail workers were running chain saws to clear the trail. The gate and lock will need to be removed – either by the residents (preferably) or the Town.

10. Set Agenda for the next meeting on Wednesday, September 18, 2024 (DM absent)

A. ACTION: Open Bids for Winter Snow Plowing for Brookline
B. ACTION: Open Bids for Winter Sand for Brookline Roads
C. BMH Update
D. Flood Plains Administrator: job description and payment
E. To Be Determined

11. Adjourn the Meeting

DM moved to adjourn the meeting, and the meeting was **adjourned at 8:36 PM**.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk