

## **Minutes**

### **Town Of Marlboro Regular Select Board Meeting**

**Thursday, April 28, 2022, 6:00pm**

Present Aaron Betts, Select Board Chair; Jim Agate, Select Board Vice-Chair; Molly Welch, Select Board Member; Nick Morgan, Select Board Assistant; David Elliot, Marlboro Road Foreman; Don Mills, Green Mountain Power; Andrew Richardson, MVFD Chief; Residents – Carla Meskill, Ed Lopata.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01pm.

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: To meet the requirements of Brattleboro Savings and Loan to process the loan to the town for the High Dump Truck purchase (approved at last meeting), the following motion indicating the Select Board's approval for the Treasurer to proceed and secure the loan from Brattleboro S & L:

Motion: Approve Treasurer Linda Peters to secure a loan from the Brattleboro S & L sufficient to affect the purchase of the Dump Truck for the Highway Department (approved at previous meeting) in the amount of ~\$68-70,000 at a ~5.2% interest rate. (Betts/Welch) – Passed unanimously.

#### **Scheduled Business**

Unscheduled Open Public Comment - None

Approval of Minutes from April 14, 2022 – (Betts/Welch) – Passed unanimously

Signature of Pay Orders - Done

#### **New Business**

##### DVFiber with Steven John

Steven John attended to provide an update on the status of DVFiber and its plans to bring Fiber Broadband to Marlboro. Steven reported that the process is proceeding and that as Marlboro is one of the more underserved (in terms of internet) towns in the state and the local area, Marlboro will be one of the first towns to be “built out”. Steven noted that the grants to proceed are in their final phases and while it is clear that the grants will be approved, the official approval should occur within the next two months (approximately) at which time materials purchasing and subsequent “build-out” will begin. Steven also noted the DVFiber is working well with GMP in investigating using their existing poles and conduits to assist in the build.

Steven then discussed that because DVFiber will be the actual IP provided there is a federal program that can assist residents with the monthly fees associated with connecting. As well, he presented that DVFiber will be doing the “hook-ups” at no charges for roughly 400 feet from the main line to the residence, noting as well that if the connection is “underground”, the connection would still be free to the resident, provided that the underground conduit is in good shape. If it is not, or if DVFiber has to install a conduit, there would be some charge for the connection. The Board brought up that a portion of the ARPA funds could be applied to broadband connections as a way to insure equity among the town's residents. The Board agreed that this will entail much more discussion and working with DVFiber will have a plan in place prior to the actual “build-out”.

The Board thanked Steven for his continued efforts with DVFiber and are confident that the details can all be worked out.

##### ARPA April 30, 2022, submission review

Nick reported that per discussions, motions and approvals at the last meeting, the Town met the April 30, 2022, deadline for reporting its ARPA submission and the Town's selection of the Standard Allowance option to allow all ARPA funds to be classified as revenue replacement to make distribution and use easier.

##### 6:25p Katie Buckley Handling ARPA funds

Due to scheduling conflicts this discussion with Katie Buckley was postponed to a later date.

##### Initial comments from GMP (Don Mills) on Plans for Lower Dover Road Electrical

Don Mills from GMP presented the board with GMP's request to use the town right of way to install new electrical lines in underground conduits on Lower Dover Road. Don noted that be moving the electric lines underground rather than on poles, will be beneficial to the residents by improving reliability of the system as falling trees, wind, etc. will no longer be a concern in knocking out the lines. The general sense of the Board was that this would be beneficial, but after asking Don what time constraints there may be, agreed to investigate any impact to the right of way, and vote on this plan by the June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting. In the meantime, the Board will seek input from the Highway Department and town residents prior to their decision.

Approval of Loader purchase dependent on receiving loan from Municipal Equipment Loan fund

Following on the 4/14/22 passed motion to approve Nick to proceed with the submission to the Municipal Equipment Loan Fund for a loan for the purchase of 2022 Case 521G Wheel Loader (75% or ~\$106,000) and at the request from the Municipal Equipment Loan fund to have a specific vote on using the loan funds on the purchase of the Loader the Board acted on the following motion:

Approve, that should the Municipal Equipment Loan Fund accept the town's request for a loan, those funds will be used to purchase a 2022 Case 512G Wheel Loader (or equivalent). (Betts/Welch) – Passed unanimously.

David Elliot attended the meeting and discussed several topics, as follows:

**Current Road Status:** David agreed that it was a difficult season, but that the process to bring the roads up to par is ongoing and reviewed that the “class 2” roads have been graded and will be further addressed once all town roads have been initially “touched”. David explained that the priority has been the “class 2” roads, followed by the “class 3” and “class 4”, with these roads prioritized by use and number of residences impacted by the road. David noted that he had reviewed and graded out the conditions of all of the town's roads and he did note that Moss Hollow and North Pond were in severe condition and that the grader would be out on Friday (4/29/22) addressing those areas on those roads in most need of attention. David also advised that by the end of next week (5/6/22), all roads that he classified as between needing the most attention will have been addressed and “touched” by the grading process to level them out and fix the potholes, etc.

**Future Planning for Roads:** Board Vice-Chair, Jim Agate reported that he had met with David and reviewed with David the best way to proceed forward and put a repair and maintenance plan into place to prevent a recurrence of this year's difficult mud season. Jim and David both noted that they would continue to discuss plans, analyze where the best use of ARPA funding and other Federal/State grants would be, and present a plan of action to the Board.

Out of their meeting, the option of hiring either another full-time road member or a summer/fall contracted road member was thought by both Jim and David to be worth serious investigation. The Board as a whole thought this was definitely worth looking into and advised David to see who was “out there” and the Board would consider official action at the next meeting.

**WRC Bridge Repair/Maintenance Funding:** The WRC has advised the town that while all of the town's bridges are satisfactory or better according to VTrans, the three bridges that are classed as “satisfactory” are available for funding. Molly took the action item to assemble the information from David as what could be needed on these bridges after which Nick will write up the request and submit to the WRC.

Motion: Approve Nick to submit to the WRC a request to accept the available funding for repair and maintenance on several of the town's bridges. (Betts/Agate) – Passed unanimously.

Comments on Road conditions from residents:

Several residents asked for time to express their thoughts on this year's “mud season” and the current conditions of the roads in Town. Part of the questions raised was why the Town was spending money on new road equipment when the road conditions are as bad as they are. Aaron responded that the equipment purchases are quite necessary as those pieces of equipment being replaced are close to complete breakdown and really do need to be replaced.

Further comment centered on the severity of this season and that they see an urgent need to not only maintain but repair the roads and that this needs to be of the highest priority. Specifically, Moss Hollow Road was referenced, and Aaron noted that David had said that Moss Hollow would be addressed on Friday and that David had been handling the situation by prioritizing the most travelled roads (class 2) first, followed by the other roads, again prioritized by the number of residences impacted by that road.

The discussion continued on more general terms of road use, traffic patterns, the overall need for increased maintenance and repair, and how to be better prepared for the next “mud season”. The Board expressed its understanding and stressed that the Board is working on hiring good road crew personnel and considering increasing the staffing of the road crew. The Board also acknowledged that a plan for increased maintenance and repair is a top priority and hopefully the incoming funding can and will provide the resources needed to improve the roads.

*Note: Should you wish to hear the full exchange or any part of the meeting, please feel free to go to Soundcloud.com, search for Marlboro Select Board, and you can listen to the full recording.*

Initial information on Rescue, Inc. situation and Marlboro's emergency response alternatives.

Nick reviewed the current situation with emergency response (ambulance/EMT) due to Brattleboro's plans to no longer contract with Rescue, Inc. for their services. The Board received the 2022/23 letter for contract renewal with Rescue, Inc. and prior to renewing, the Board tasked Nick to write an inquiry letter to Rescue, Inc. as to their intentions for continuing to provide **Marlboro**

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emergency services to the Town of Marlboro and at what cost. At the same time, Nick will be looking into possible alternatives to Rescue, Inc. and hopefully will have a response from Rescue, Inc. by the 5/11/22 meeting, or at the latest the 5/26/22 meeting. The status quo will continue until July 1, 2022 (when Brattleboro is breaking off on its own). At this time, it appears that Rescue, Inc will be maintaining coverage of Marlboro, but the Board is pushing to nail down the details. MVFD Chief Andrew Richardson who was in attendance added his voice to the overall sentiment of the need to investigate the situation and looked forward to the information as it was gathered. His general sense was that Rescue, Inc. was going to continue, but urged gathering more information.

#### Review of announcement seeking volunteers for commissions (Energy, Conservation, & Rescue)

Nick wrote up an announcement for publication on FPF, Facebook, and the town website, detailing the Board's search for volunteers to revitalize the Conservation and Energy commissions which have lain fallow for the past couple of years. The sense of the Board was that such a notice was a good idea and look forward to the revitalization of these committees.

#### Confirm change of day and/or time for next Board meeting

Due to some scheduling conflicts, the Board moved that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, at 6:00pm. (Betts/Welch) – Passed unanimously

#### **Old Business**

##### Signatures on Estimate for Town House Project & approval to provide 65% down payment to cover equipment & material costs.

Having approved the work on the heating system in the Town House at previous meeting, the Board signed the estimates from Coldflame and acted on the following motion:

Approve a 65% down payment to Coldflame to cover equipment and material costs to be paid as quickly as possible to keep project on track. (Betts/Welch) – Passed unanimously

##### Initial slight change on TTT trucking contract (no price impact, just more complete explanation of costs)

The TTT hauling contract has been signed by both the Board and by TTT. TTT did add an explanation of the "tip fee" breaking down the costs, included this on the contract they returned to the Board. In order to finalize the agreement with TTT, the Board needed to "initial" this write in explanation which was done.

**Motion to Adjourn:** (Betts/Agate) – Passed unanimously – 8:16p