

Draft Minutes
Town Of Marlboro Select Board Meeting
Thursday, May 11, 2023, 6:00pm

Call to order @ 6:01pm

Attendees: James Agate – Chair; Molly Welch – Vice Chair; Jeff Skramstad – Member; Nick Morgan – SB Assistant/Town Administrator; Andrew Richardson, Road Supervisor; Kate Kirkwood – Chair-Energy Committee; Mike Purcell – HPC; Pieter Von Loon – HMCA; Jean Boardman, Patti Smith, Nancy & Bob Anderson – Residents.

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: None

Scheduled Business

Unscheduled Open Public Comment: Kate Kirkwood in her capacity as a resident of Marlboro came to the Board to discuss the potential for the private drive servicing herself and the Church Hollow Road Homeowners Association (other homes on the drive) becoming a town road. The Board and Andrew noted that this was already being discussed and that they would be in touch with her & the association on next steps to move forward.

Approval of Minutes from April 27, 2023 (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)

Signature of Pay Orders – Due to computer issue the pay orders were not ready and will be signed in the coming week or at the next SB meeting. Nick reported that Treasurer Linda Peters, who reported the issue, was fine with this week's orders being handled in this fashion.

New Business

Energy Committee Report

Kate Kirkwood came before the SB in her role as Chair of the Energy Committee to report on work being done by the EC. As they are a newly reconstituted Board, Kate advised that the EC had gone to the Town Plan and reviewed the goals for improved Energy usage, efficiency, and conservation for Marlboro (both the Municipality and Residents). The EC decided to initially focus on the goal of increasing overall energy efficiency. While the Town is working this issue directly with the State initiatives (specifically, the MERP program), the EC is targeting providing information and possible assistance to residents on improving their energy efficiency, to this end, the EC will be holding an “Energy Fair” on October 14th, 2023. The EC is actively working with Energy suppliers, efficiency experts, providers of the means to increase home energy efficiency, and gathering general information to disseminate to the public. The EC also intends to have a “table” at the regular Town Fair in September to start the process of reaching out to Town residents.

Regarding the Town and the MERP, the EC will be backing up Nick & Town Officials as they navigate the process and are looking forward to the first stage of the program which will provide a “mini-grant” of up to \$4,000 for the Town (and the Energy Committee) to use to advise and inform residents of how to be more energy resilient (per the dictates of the Program & the mini-grant).

Molly noted that she was interested to know if there is any information regarding Electric & Hybrid vehicles and in Vermont, from what source is the electricity for these vehicles is being derived from (i.e., coal fired plant, natural gas, hydro-electric, etc.). The general consensus was that this was unclear, and that the EC would look into it.

Discussion on Privacy and posting audio to Soundcloud & Video to YouTube

Nick brought to the Board a concern regarding SB Meeting recordings and participant privacy issues, especially concerning the video recordings posted to YouTube. The Board chose to take the issue under advisement and to revisit it at the next meeting and come up with a plan.

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Sonic Circus Festival Liquor Permit

Forrest requested the Board to review the request from Sonic Circus Festival for a liquor permit. Motion to approve Sonic Circus Festival request for liquor permit (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously).

Re-appointment of Allan McLane to Marlboro Tree Forest Fire Warden

Motion to re-appoint Allan McLane as the Marlboro Tree Forest Fire Warden (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously).

Mike Purcell & Pieter Von Loon – First Aid Building

Nick outlined the current with the old First Aid Building on the Hogback property. The building needs to be removed and the materials it is constructed with needs to be remediated so it is not a simple demolition. Past estimates put the cost at \$30-\$35,000. The Town has sought funding sources for this, but due to some regulations State funding through the WRC is not currently available.

The Board asked Pieter if the HMCA might be able contribute some funding out of the endowment, to which he responded that the amount of money the endowment is generating is not sufficient to cover the regular activities of the HPC/HMCA and provide funds for the demolition. While the issue is not finalized, the Board noted that it would have to keep looking for funding that might include the HMCA. To this end, Nick noted that funding through the BDCC/SeVEDS might be available, but that in order for the Town to seek this funding, they would require that the area be developed in some way (tourist kiosk, Hogback Museum, etc.). Nick took the action item to reach out to the BDCC to see what guidelines they may have.

To help move this project along, Mike Purcell committed to reaching out to get updated quote(s) on costs.

Highway Department Report

Grant Road & Jenckes Road Beaver Issues:

Road Foreman, Andrew Richardson, noted that there were issues on both Jenckes Road and Grant Road with beavers creating problems for the roads. On Grant Road an existing deceiver failed which caused flooding during the recent rainstorms. Andrew noted that using grating (which needs to be cleared frequently has provided a temporary solution, but a more permanent plan both for these immediate issues and future strategy needs to be put in place. To this end, Andrew will be meeting with Tyler Brown of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources-Wildlife Division, the week of 5/15/23. The VT ANR does provide a program which funds 50% of material and construction costs of deceivers and Andrew will be working with Tyler to put this program into effect.

Resident Patti Smith, who was present to speak on this issue, noted that the town had previously used Skip Lyle (a very renowned beaver conflict expert and constructor of deceivers) and that it would be advantageous to reach out again to him to get his thoughts and opinions. The Board noted that this would be a good idea and would follow-up once Andrew and Tyler had the opportunity to have their discussion. Patti also offered her own expertise on beavers and human-beaver interactions at any time. The Board thanked Patti for her willingness to help and said that they would take her up on her offer.

Jim Agate raised the question of whether it was possible as a way to assuage the problem by installing some sort of piping that could be installed in areas of potential flooding which could drain the area into a nearby creek or stream. Andrew noted this and would bring it up with Tyler.

After a brief discussion as whether deceivers are really the best answer, Jeff put forth the following plan to move forward: Andrew would report back on his planning with Tyler Brown and the Board would request Patti to reach out to Skip Lyle to see if he would be willing to attend a Board meeting to give his thoughts and expertise. The Board further asked Nick to schedule further discussion at the 5/25/23 meeting.

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Highway Department Report (continued)

New Road Crew Hire:

Andrew reported that the search for a new Road Crew member had been successful, and he was happy to report on the hiring of Joe Soumar, who will be starting with the Crew on Monday, 5/15/23.

New Vacation Accrual Policy for Marlboro Employees

The Board reviewed the new vacation accrual policy which will provide for employees to accrue vacation time during their first year on a monthly basis up to 40 hours (1 week), accrue up to 80 hours (2 weeks) in years two through four, 120 hours (3 years) in years five through nine and 160 hours (4 weeks) in years ten and beyond.

Motion to adopt the new vacation accrual policy as presented (Agate/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

David's Tools that remain at the Highway Garage:

While there continues to be some confusion over what tools are actually David's and which are Bob's, and which tools are being requested to be returned. Further discussion on this issue was tabled until Molly could speak with Danny, a list compiled of the tools, and this list presented to Lisa, Danny, and Bob to see what they would want returned, which could continue to be used by the Highway Dept, and which can be disposed of.

No Parking Ordinance (and Signs) – Ames Hill & Cowpath (entrance to South Pond)-Tabled Higley Hill Road (discussion of Timeline)-Tabled

Old Business

Report on the National Grid Tower Contract Renewal (amendment)

Nick and Molly reported on their meeting with Town Lawyer Bob Fisher, who provided the Board with his first draft of a counter proposal to National Grid's recent proposal. As part of this negotiation, the HPC has been very adamant that National Grid needs to fulfill their requirement to maintain the area around and access road to the Grid's location. To that end, Bob Fisher had requested a plan and cost estimates of what the Town is asking for, which Bob Anderson (with **huge** thanks from the Select Board) complete within two days and was transmitted to Bob Fisher for inclusion in the Town's counter proposal. One issue the Board will continue to review is once the maintenance work has been done, what is the best way to maintain the improvement. This will be reviewed and decided upon as the Board moves forward.

Upon reviewing the draft of the proposal, the Board had a couple of adjustments which Nick will convey to Bob, who will incorporate them and resubmit the proposal to the Board for their approval before sending it to National Grid.

Town Administrator Report

Lighted Speed Sign Effectiveness:

Nick reported that he was still waiting for a response from WRC's Colin Bratton on this issue which he should have by the next meeting.

ACO Coverage:

With Town ACO Peggy Tiffany being away for an extended period of time in June, the Board asked Clarence Boston to step in and he accepted. Clarence provided a letter to the Board detailing his willingness to take this on in accordance with state statutes which the Board signed and returned to him.

Woodlock Driveway Permit:

Motion to approve the new Woodlock property driveway permit. (Skramstad/Agate – Passed Unanimously)

Motion to adjourn at 7:30p (Agate/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)