

Minutes

Town of Marlboro, VT Select Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Call to Order @ 6:02pm

Attendees: Jim Agate – Chair; Molly Welch – SB Vice-Chair; Jeff Skramstad – SB Member; Nick Morgan – SB Assistant/Town Admin; Kate Kirkwood – Energy Committee (ZOOM); Meg Staloff – SeVEDS/BDCC; Andrew Richardson – Highway Supervisor; Linda Peters – Treasurer; Rebecca Sevigny – Asst. Treasurer; Jean Boardman – Resident.

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: Nick advised that the discussion on the Potash Hill/EDU situation should be tabled until a subsequent meeting.

Scheduled Business:

Unscheduled Open Public Comment: Kate Kirkwood noted that the Energy Committee was looking into the Solar Panels on the Highway Garage and requested information on moving forward. Nick noted that this would be considered by the MERP Building Assessments and if definitely on the list to consider for the implementation phase of the MERP.

Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2023 – Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously.

Signature of Pay Orders - Done

New Business

SeVEDS/BDCC update: Meg Staloff (Southern VT Economy Project Manager of the BDCC) came to the Board to review SeVEDS/BDCC's activities in general and in Marlboro in specifics in support of their yearly request for funding included in the Town Warning/Ballot. Meg noted that a major component of SeVEDS/BDCC's activities in the area is involved with workforce development and retention, with a focus on assisting younger (high school and even middle school) residents/students in identifying potential avenues of work and/or career. Meg also advised that SeVEDS/BDCC is also involved with area community organizations (such as the MCC & MVFD) on general community-oriented projects. The Board asked about the process and procedures for accessing the abilities of the SeVEDS/BDCC, and Meg noted that they are open to any and all contacts and are a phone call away and anybody within the organization will be able to help or direct the inquirer to the proper person.

Scheduling Issues: Nick took time to review several scheduling issues through the end of the year and into January of 2024:

- The MVFD is looking to present a request for ARPA funds, the date is still in flux and will be coordinated over the next couple of weeks.
- Nick confirmed to the Board that the Budget Centric Warning/Ballot info meeting will be held on 1/6/24 at the MCC from 2:00-5:00pm.
- The upcoming meeting at the MCC on 12/16/23 will be handled as follows: The Public Hearing on the Zoning Amendments has been noticed for 12/16/23 from 2:00-3:00pm and will be followed by a third info meeting right after from approximately 3:00-4:30pm.

Brooke Cassell – Flat Tires on Grant Road – was not able to attend and the item was tabled.

Potash Hill/EDU/Planning Commission discussions: As Town Attorney, Bob Fisher, is in discussions with Potash and reviewing the legal aspects of this issue, it was decided to postpone until the 12/28/23 meeting. Nick will coordinate with all parties (Bob Fisher, Planning Commission, & Zoning Administrator) to make this happen and to keep all parties advised.

Windham County Sheriff's Office: Nick reported on the meeting he attended with the WCSO regarding the potential plan to run a pilot program of regional policing in Windham County by the sheriff's office. Such a plan in place of a "contract model" (the current status), could be less expensive and provide better police coverage of a small town such as Marlboro. Nick stressed that the Sheriff had stressed that this was not a "fait accompli" but an investigation into the feasibility of such a plan and taking the first legislative steps to at least be able to investigate such a plan with an ultimate goal to present a finalized plan to the county's towns for their input, discussion, and ultimately a decision on whether to move forward with the new model. Along these lines, the WCSO asked for a letter (with absolutely no commitment to the plan) showing support of the Select Board to investigate a regional policing model. Nick composed such a letter and the Select Board agreed to sign and have Nick forward it to Sheriff Mark Anderson.

Nick also reported that there will be a meeting on the consortium model used by the WCSO for their Animal Control Officer. Last year the town decided not to participate, and Nick advised he will be attending the meeting on 12/5/23 and report back to the Board at which time they can decide to join or go on a "one-off" contract for the WCSO ACO. Nick further reported that along this line, a contract for the "one-off" use will be available for review and signature in the next couple of weeks.

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Highway Department:

Cowpath 40 Parking near Ames Hill Intersection: The topic of preventing parking along the side of the road on Cowpath 40 causing a hazard to Highway Department Plow Trucks and Fire Equipment was discussed. As determined in previous meetings, the Town has cleared a section off the roadway for limited parking of about four cars, which the Highway Department will maintain. In order to effectively implement this plan, the Highway Department will erect “No Parking” signs where appropriate and hopefully dissuade people from parking along the road. Molly will also reach out to the AHCC to see if a sign could also be erected in the new “parking” area saying something like “No Overnight Parking”.

Review and decision on Highway Garage Camera system from HSS: The Board reviewed the quote from HSS on a camera security system for the Highway Garage Campus, noting that the current quote with a zoomable camera to closely monitor the Recycling Center and potentially get license plate numbers of those abusing the center, is a bit too costly. The Board tasked Nick to contact HSS and see if the over quote could be reduced or what the cost would be if the Town forgoes the “zoomable” camera and just goes with a wide-angle camera (with night vision) to provide general security for the campus.

Winter Snow Plowing: On request from Road Supervision, Andrew Richardson, the Board reviewed a simple statement to be published via the Town’s social media and FPF on the Standard Operating Procedure for Winter Snow Removal. The statement simply states that the Highway Department is responsible for clearing, plowing, salting, and sanding the town’s roads and reminds residents that the plowing and clearing of their personal driveways are their own responsibility and does not fall to the Town Highway Department. Andrew also addressed an issue on Straton Hill Road that occurred during the recent snowfall, noting that there was a mistake made and part of Straton Hill Road that is normally plowed was missed, due to the learning curve of the newer crew member, and that once the issue was brought to the attention of the Highway Department to oversight was corrected. Andrew noted that he will stay on this and make sure it does not happen again.

ACO Request to use \$100 of the approximately \$900 in the ARF Fund for the WCHS Pet Drive: Marlboro ACO, Peggy Tiffany, advised the Board that there is currently \$900 in the ARF fund and that she would like the Board to approve a \$100 donation to the Windham County Humane Society for their annual Pet Food Drive. **Motion: Approve the use of \$100 of the existing ARF funds (\$900) as a donation to the WCHS Pet Food Drive. (Agate/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

Treasurer Department:

Cost of Living Salary Increase: The official federal COLA (cost of living adjustment) was pegged at 3.2% for 2024. As the Town uses the Federal COLA in determining the annual salary increase for Town employees. The Board reviewed the history of using COLA in this fashion and it was noted that this has been the norm for many years, including years when there was no COLA and hence no salary increases. This being the case the Board noted that it was only appropriate to continue this practice and institute a 3.2% increase for 2024. **Motion: Adopt a 3.2% salary increase for Marlboro town employees for 2024. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)**

General Update: Asst. Treasurer, Rebecca Sivigny, presented a basic update on Expenses, Revenue, and on hand funds as part of an ongoing plan to have the Treasurers present to the Board a monthly summary of where the town stands with its finances. The Board and the Treasurers also reviewed and discussed the Highway Equipment Fund, how the rates are determined, how the fund is utilized, and how to use it effectively moving forward. Finally, there was a discussion on the formats of the Treasurer reports moving forward, in terms of what they show and how they are laid out.

Old Business

Town Administrator Report: Town Administrator, Nick Morgan, advised the Board that the FEMA process is approaching its conclusion (note – funds will probably take at least a year to arrive once submission is completed), the RFP for the Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant is also close to finalization, and Nick has accumulated the names of 3-4 contractors who could handle the Garage Mold issue and will be reaching out to them over the next two-three weeks.

Nick also advised the Board that the HPC and the HMCA are looking into options for dealing with the First Aid Building on Hogback Mountain and are looking for the Town to provide funding for the work. This issue has been percolating for many years and does seem to be coming to a head. The Board recognized that the First Aid Building does present a real potential liability for the Town since the Town is the landowner. The Board asked Nick to investigate the ability to use the Town’s ARPA funds to fund this work and to schedule a full discussion of this topic at an upcoming meeting in December.

Motion to Adjourn @ 7:44p (Agate/Welch – Passed unanimously)