

Minutes

Town of Marlboro, VT Select Board Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Call to Order @ 6:01pm (Despite absence of James Agate, Molly Welch & Jeff Skramstad constituted a quorum, so the meeting proceeded under normal order.)

Attendees: Molly Welch – SB Vice-Chair; Jeff Skramstad – SB Member; Nick Morgan – SB Assistant/Town Admin; Andrew Richardson – Highway Supervisor; Forrest Holzapfel – Town Clerk; Kate Kirkwood – Energy Committee; Linda Peters – Treasurer; Rebecca Sevigny – Asst Treasurer; Leland Smith – President, AHCC; Brian Stavely & Spenser Knickerbocker – Nordic Ski Club; Gail MacArthur, Jean Boardman - Residents.

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: NONE

Scheduled Business (Note: Times are approximate):

6:00-6:10p Unscheduled Open Public Comment: NONE

6:11p Approval of Minutes from December 28, 2023 (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

6:11p Signature of Pay Orders - DONE

New Business

Combining Select Board & School Board Statutory Info meetings on 2/24/24: Nick advised the Board that through discussions with Dan MacArthur of the School Board, that both the School Board and the Select Board Town Warning Info meetings would be held on the same day (Sat, 2/24/24) at the MCC, with the School Board running from 1:00-2:30pm followed by the Select Board from 2:30-4:00pm. Forrest and Nick will coordinate with the School Board to have all necessary notice done according to statute. The Board advised that they agreed with this plan.

2024 Town Warning:

Review of New Articles 6 & 7 on Returning to In Person Town Meeting & Article 18 on “South Pond Greeter” program – Gail MacArthur came to the Board to make sure that they were aware of the addition to the Warning of two articles regarding a vote to return to “in-person” Town Meeting. The Board acknowledged these new articles (6 & 7) and thanked Gail for her work on this issue. Additionally, Nick advised that another “funding” article concerning the South Pond Greeter Program to help avoid “invasive species” was also added. The Board acknowledged the addition of all three of these articles and noted that they would be included in the overall vote on the warning to take place at the end of this section of the meeting.

Report from Forrest & Nick on Attorney notes on Warning – It was reported that Town Attorney, Bob Fisher, had reviewed the Warning and found all to be in order and also advised that based on past history, the way the Town has handled Zoning Amendments in the past has been to put approved amendments on the Town Warning/Ballot for the voters to weigh in on.

Treasurer Department Comments – The Treasurers came before the Board to verify the final top line budget numbers reported on the Town Warning. The Board thanked the Treasurers for their monumental efforts and noted that the final approval would be included in the overall vote on the warning to take place at the end of this section of the meeting.

Discussion & Vote on Complete 2024 Town Warning – The Board took time to review the final version of the 2024 Town Warning and also checked with Town Clerk, Forrest Holzapfel, that it met statutory requirements. Once this was completed the Board voted to approve the Warning and pass it along to Forrest to process per statute. **Motion: Approve 2024 Marlboro Town Warning including all articles as presented on 1/25/24. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)**

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Highway Department:

On Road Parking Situation at intersection of Ames Hill & Cowpath 40 – The Board noted that there has been an issue with people parking on the road on both Cowpath 40 and Ames Hill at this intersection to access the land and trails around South Pond for Cross-Country Skiing, Snow Shoeing, and/or simple Hiking. As previously noted in past meetings, Andrew has been concerned with the safety issues this poses both in terms of blocking access not only to snowplows and other highway vehicles but also as a potential hazard for Emergency Vehicles.

Leland Smith (AHCC) and Blake Stavely & Spencer Knickerbocker (Nordic Club) came to this meeting to discuss possible solutions. While the Nordic Club mostly has access to their trails from the old college area and are not directly impacted by this situation, both Blake and Spencer were happy to participate and do what they could to help. Leland over the past several months has been extremely helpful to the Town and has agreed in the past to allow for the clearing of an area for Off-Road parking on Cowpath 40. The Board, Andrew, and Leland discussed how to better use this parking area, even expanding it slightly and Leland has agreed that signage indicating that people should park there can be put up on a nearby tree (wired not nailed) as the ground is currently too frozen to allow for a pole to be put it. It was agreed that at this time it was a question of education regarding the “parking lot” and the hazards of parking on the road. No one wanted the situation to become adversarial and that now was not the time to revamp Town Parking regulations, much better to give this all time for people to get used to the Parking area and make sure that it is accessible and usable.

Tyler Brown – VT ANR – The Board tasked Nick to reach out to the VT Agency of Natural Resources (Tyler Brown) and make plans for discussions on the Beaver/Human Conflict in Marlboro come the spring.

Mold at Highway Garage – Andrew and Nick noted that rather than go for a full construction plan to remediate the Mold situation at the Garage, they felt a better course of action was to reach out to the area professionals in Mold Remediation (i.e., Serv Pro, etc.) to get quotes on removing the mold and how long that might last. Should it be discovered in this process that major construction to replace walls, etc., a complete plan could be revisited, but the immediate need to remove the mold could proceed.

New Hire/CDL Training – Andrew noted that the process for finding a new Road Crew member, as previously discussed and approved, the Board was asked to make a final decision on the Town paying the roughly \$5,500.00 training program for a CDL B license should the new hire not have a CDL. The Board approved this plan.

Motion: Should it be required, the Town/Highway Department will pay for the training necessary for a new employee to acquire their CDL B license (cost of approximately \$5,500.00). (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)

Administrative:

“One-Off” ACO contract with WCSO – The Board reviewed and signed the contract for the remainder of the year (through June 30, 2024) with the Windham County Sheriff Office to be able to access the WCSO Animal Control Officer on a “one-off” basis for an established hourly rate should the Town’s own ACO be unable or unavailable to handle a serious situation. It was noted that the use of the WCSO ACO was for serious situations and not “your average barking dog” problem.

Will Shakespeare Resignation from WRC – Nick advised the Board that Will Shakespeare would be stepping down from his position as one of the Town’s representatives to the Windham Region Council. Both Will and Edie Mas recommended that the Board might want to approach Patti Smith to take the slot. The Board tasked Nick to make the inquiry and report back.

Bee Research on Hogback Mountain – The Town was contacted by Laurel Copeland of the HMCA regarding Forest Bee Research by Dr. Katie Turo on Hogback Mountain. Both the HMCA and HPC approved the project and per Town regs had Dr. Tura fill out a facility use agreement and Laurel submitted it to the Board for signature. The Board reviewed the FUA, noted the HMCA & HPC agreement with the project and signed the FUA, tasking Nick to return it to Laurel via email.

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Administrative: (continued)

Amended Vacation Policy – As part of a modernization of the Payroll process using QuickBooks, changes needed to be made in how vacation time is accrued and how hire/anniversary dates impact the time of service of the employee and hence where they fall within the vacation policy and how many days they are entitled to. In order to make things easier and equitable, time of service and other parameters are based on the employee's hire date. An explicit document reflecting these policy changes was drawn up for review and approval and subsequent to the passage of the following motion, this document will be included in the Employee Handbook/Regulations. **Motion: Approve the changes to how employees acquire vacation days and the establishment of the Hire/Anniversary date to determine time of service. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously) Document was signed and will be included in employee handbook.**

Notice to Planning Commission on Decisions on Zoning Amendments – At the 12/28/23 Select Board Meeting, the Board reviewed and decided on which Zoning Amendments to pass on to the Voters on the Town Warning. (*see the 12/28/23 minutes for full discourse on the Amendments approved and denied*). At this meeting the Board tasked Nick to write a notice to the Planning Commission mostly explaining the reasons the Board voted “nay” on items 1, 2, 3, & 4. Nick fulfilled this task and presented the notice to the Board for their review and approval to send it to the Planning Commission. The Board was good with the Notice and instructed Nick to proceed with sending it on to the Planning Commission.

Old Business

Town Administrator Report:

BGS Grants – At the request of the Board, Nick looked into possible grants from VT BGS. Nick reported that as of this time all of the 2023 grants have been allocated and the new grants for 2024 have not been released yet. Further, Nick noted that he signed up for email notification of when the 2024 grants are released, and he will continue to monitor the situation and report back to the Board.

FEMA Update – Nick reported that he is in the last stages of the process and was advised by the Town's FEMA representative, that they just needed a couple more items and the data/information stage would be complete, and the Town's request would be “sent up the ladder” for final review and, hopefully, approval. Nick noted that he would keep the Board apprised of the status of the Town's claim.

Camera at Recycle Update – The deposit for the installation of the camera system at the Highway Garage has been sent and once received by HSS, scheduling of the work will proceed.

Windham County Sheriff Office – The WSCO will be sending their 2025 contract for review shortly and Nick asked the Board if they would like Sheriff Mark Anderson to come to a meeting in March to discuss both the ACO consortium and his pilot program for “regional policing” in the county and what both would mean for Marlboro in terms of coverage and costs.

Adjourn @ 7:00pm (Welch/Skramstad – Passed Unanimously)