

Minutes

Town of Marlboro Select Board Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2024 @ 6pm – Town Office & Via Zoom

Attendees: Molly Welch – Chair; Jeff Skramstad – Vice-Chair; Kate Kirkwood – Member (via ZOOM); Nick Morgan – Town Admin/SB Assist; Andrew Richardson – Road Supervisor; Mary Sargent – Zoning Administrator; Don Mills – GMP; Philip Johansson, Kate Morgan – Residents.

BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING:

Call to Order @ 6:00pm

Sign Guidelines of Conduct - Done

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: None

Scheduled Business

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

6:11p Approval of Minutes from July 25, 2024 – Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously.

6:11p Signature of Pay Orders - Done

New Business

Highway Department:

Don Mills – General Information on GMP's Plans for Burying Electrical Lines & Improving Line Resilience – Don from GMP was invited by the Board to review what GMP is doing in the area (Windham County) to improve electrical line resilience to ensure electrical power to the area. He discussed that GMP was “hardening” the area’s electrical lines through two main methods: 1) using a new type of cable for “in the air/on poles” that is much stronger and resistant to breaking should a pole (or line) come down due to weather/falling branch/tree; 2) working with towns to bury lines where possible, mostly within a town’s right of way working with highway departments to ensure the roads are returned to standard (or even above standard). Don explained that GMP has buried approximately 13 miles of electrical lines in several surrounding towns and that GMP’s goal is to bury as much as possible. Besides the increase in resilience, burying lines also can save up to \$30 million dollars in tree branch trimming which ultimately can result in overall lower electricity costs for customers. Don also noted that GMP’s *Storm Restoration Program* (including increased number of crews) has cut way back on outage events and the time they last.

Cowpath 40 Electrical Line Plan w/ GMP – (note – Nick advised that as a landowner on Cowpath 40, any contributions to the conversation were in that capacity and not in his role as the Town Administrator.) Following the above, the discussion moved to the request to bury an electrical line on a small section of Cowpath 40. Don outlined the plan that he and Andrew Richardson (Road Supervisor) had discussed to get the Marlboro Highway Department’s approval before presenting it to the involved residents and the Select Board. Andrew noted in the meeting that he was onboard with the plan. Don then reviewed GMP’s plan: GMP would “drop” a line from the existing pole and then proceed to trench and bury the line five (5) feet deep within the road (town right of way), with all proper conduits, warning tape, etc. and return the road to its original (if not better) condition, to the neighboring property where the line is going. Once the line reaches the private property of the intended customer, said customer would then take over responsibility for the necessary trenching on their land. Don and Andrew both noted that part of GMP’s plan when burying lines in town right of way, was, that should the trenching impact a culvert that culvert would be repaired (if possible) or replaced at no cost to the town. Don also noted that the conduit that GMP is using has space for fiber optic lines which will dovetail nicely with the coming installation of fiber broadband by DVFiber. Both Philip & Kate (the residents involved) were both happy with this solution, with Kate even noting that she was very glad that an effective solution could be found, and that Philip would be able to get electrical service. Finally, Andrew suggested the Board review the idea of a motion to pre-approve GMP burying lines as the need or desire arises. The Board agreed that this would be a good idea to discuss and instructed Nick to place it on the 8/22/24 agenda.

Marlboro Select Board Minutes – August 8, 2024 – Page Two

Highway Department: (continued)

Speed Bumps for South Road to Calm Speeding - As part of the town's speed calming plan for South Road, the Board directed Andrew and Nick to research and quote the cost of "installable" rugged-rubber "speed tables". They reported that through Traffic Logix (a company that participates in the Sourcewell program that Marlboro is a member), the correct size for South Road, 10.5' x 21' x 3", with white chevrons already imbedded in the table would cost \$4,475.00 per "table"; delivered including all installation hardware, a 2-year product guarantee, and a robust customer service operation. The Board and Andrew discussed the number and location of "tables" and settled on three (3) "tables" to be located at the entrance to the town center (@ Fire House & @ Historical Society) and directly in the center of town opposite the Town Office/Post Office Building. For a total of approximately \$13,425.00. **Motion: Approve the purchase of three (3) "Speed Tables w/ white chevrons" from Traffic Logix to have them "in house" for installation after the last of Winter snows. (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously).**

Following the speed table discussion, the Board briefly discussed other parts of the "speed calming plan", including Andrew updating the Board on his progress to paint road symbols and re-establish the lines at the shoulder and center of the road. He noted that he is contacting Brattleboro Highway to see about borrowing their painting machine and possibly any "stencils" they may have. He also noted that for a couple of symbols (i.e., straight lines across the road leading to the tables) the Highway Department can make them inexpensively out of wood and that the "road pain" is relatively inexpensive and well and can be handled within his budget. Andrew expressed that he would speak with his District 1 Road representative (Patrick Wilson) and finalize details and requirements with him for both painted road notifications and for lane size on South Road (a slight narrowing within road safety regulations has been shown to calm traffic). Jeff also asked about clarification on the thought of reconfiguring the road line painting to allow for space for parallel parking on one side of the road. In order to provide time for Andrew to consult with the state and District 1, the Board asked Nick to schedule further discussion for the first meeting in October.

Highway Job Descriptions – Andrew drew up two full job description, one for his position (Road Supervisor) and one for an official Road Foreman, who would act as "second in command" under the Road Supervisor. The Board discussed what title the top Highway Department official should have (Supervisor vs. Commissioner) and settled on Road Supervisor as the title of the top Highway Department official. After some minor edits, the sense of the Board noted that the descriptions were appropriate and as this falls directly under Andrew's operation of the Highway Department, felt that a motion accepting them was not needed and they should be incorporated into the Highway Department's SOP.

Report on Road Crew Hiring Search – Nick noted that a new job description/ad for the empty Road Crew position was created by him and Andrew. This new ad was placed on various social media and job hiring sites. At this time, both Nick and Andrew agreed that at this time spending money on a more traditional newspaper ad was not advisable, as the expense simply did not result in appropriate candidates. They reported the search is ongoing and they would keep the Board apprised.

Mold Remediation at Highway Garage – After review of the competing bids for remediating the mold condition at the highway garage (in executive session to protect the bidders) the Board decided on accepting Catamount's 1A bid for a cleaning and painting (mold resistant) the garage interior (and removing a small section of sheet rock). Due to scheduling and advice to wait on the work until after the Winter months, this work would commence in the spring. In the meantime, the town would use over the counter mold retardant to do an initial cleaning and remediation to limit the issue until the full remediation in the spring. **Motion: Approve the acceptance of Catamount Environmental Inc.'s 1A option bid for the remediation of the Mold condition in the town garage. (Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)** The Board tasked Nick to advise Catamount of the acceptance of their bid and to work out details with Andrew and Catamount. Together with the Board, a plan would be developed for the initial cleaning before Winter.

Marlboro Select Board Minutes – August 8, 2024 – Page Three

Treasury & HR:

Decision on Disability Insurance Expansion – At the 7/25/24 meeting, Nick presented the Board with a proposal to expand the town’s Life Insurance and Short Term Disability to any town employee who works at least 30 hours per week (this would impact three (3) employees – Town Clerk, Treasurer, & Assistant Treasurer). The Board requested some time to consider this and decided at tonight’s meeting that the additional cost (\$16.66/month – Life Insurance & \$79.29/month – Short Term Disability) was worth the expense. **Motion: Approve the addition of the three (3) additional town employees to the town’s current Life Insurance/Short Term Disability coverage as outlined in the Melina Ziolecki email of 7/18/24. (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

Approvals and Signatures:

Liquor License Approval – Sonic Circus - Forrest (Town Clerk) submitted a Liquor License request from Sonic Circus for their annual end of summer event. Based on the previous history of this event and the positive nature of the event in the past, the Board had no objection to the request. **Motion: To approve the Liquor License request for Sonic Circus as provided by Town Clerk, Forrest Holzapfel. (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

Town Fair Use Form – The Board signed the facility use forms submitted by the Marlboro Town Fair.

Motion to move to Executive Session @ 7:15p (Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)

Motion to return to regular Order @ 7:43p (Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)

Old Business

Decision on LHMP Bid – Based on discussion of the bids submitted for the town’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan grant, the Board settled on the bid submitted by the Windham Regional Commission. As a note, all bids did fall within the parameters of the grant. **Motion: Award Marlboro’s LHMP Grant to the WRC at the cost of \$11,115 of which (per grant parameters) 75% would be covered by the grant. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)** The Board asked Nick to convey this decision to the WRC and advise on the status of the plan as the process moves forward.

Update on Lead Abatement Grant/Project – Kate Kirkwood – As Kate is involved with this project, at the beginning of this discussion she recused herself from any decision making by the Board. Kate reported to the Board that this Grant/Project (Capacity Building Grant) was receiving very good reception from many of the towns around Marlboro, and several have already provided “Letters of Support” for the project. As this part of the process is for a Grant to determine the feasibility (“capacity”) of a full program (grant supported) for Lead Abatement. Kate noted her previous work in Sullivan County (NH), a county very similar to Windham County in size and construction, indicates that with the proper grant funding and support, such a Lead Abatement program could be very successful. Kate asked if the Board would provide a “Letter of Support” joining other area towns. Such a letter does not commit the town to any funds or involvement of personnel, just that the town is interested in participating in a program of Lead Abatement (strongly targeted toward preventing Lead exposure to children). **Motion: Agree to write a “Letter of Support” for the program and for an initial “capacity” grant. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously – Kirkwood recused/abstained)**

Town Administrator Report:

Table at Town Fair – Nick advised that he had received information on the possibility of the Select Board setting up a table at the Town Fair. With the scheduled “Info Meetings” in the Fall, the Board felt that a table would not be necessary at this time.

Marlboro Select Board Minutes – August 8, 2024 – Page Four

Old Business (continued)

Town Administrator Report: (continued)

Vacation Time Town Administrator – Per a request from the Town Administrator/SB Assistant, the Board considered providing two weeks (27 hours/week) of paid vacation time (based on years of service and the town’s personnel policy). **Motion: Approve Two (2) weeks (@ 27 hours per week) of paid vacation time for the Town Administrator/SB Assistant (Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)**

Scheduling –

Nick advised the Board of several scheduling issues as follows:

Incorporate the School Board into the already scheduled SB Informational Fall meetings. The Board tasked Nick to reach out to the School Board and suggested that the SB would take the 2:00-3:30p time period, after which the School Board could pick up. Nick advised that he reach out to the School Board and work out details.

Nick reminded the Board that the Emergency Management “Tabletop” Emergency Exercise was scheduled for 9/4/24 from 3-7p and that EMD Jay Sparks requested that all members be in attendance.

Due to a conflict, the 9/12/24 SB meeting needs to be rescheduled. **Motion: Reschedule the 9/12/24 SB meeting to 9/3/24 in the Town Office at 6:00pm. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)**

MERP Update – Nick advised that due to Marlboro’s ranking among towns in terms of “energy burden” (Marlboro has a “LOW Burden” ranking), implementation funds from this program are very unlikely and as a corollary to this, the town’s building assessment reports are not even being generated at this time. While there is not much that can be done, town officials have expressed their dissatisfaction with the whole MERP process to the Grant administrators and State officials.

Motion to Adjourn @ 8:08p (Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)