

Minutes

Town of Marlboro Select Board Meeting

Thursday, August 22, 2024 @ 6pm – Town Office & Via Zoom

Attendees: Molly Welch – SB Chair; Jeff Skramstad – SB Vice-Chair; Nick Morgan – Town Admin/SB Assistant; Andrew Richardson – Road Supervisor; Rebecca Sevigny – Treasurer; Forrest Holzapfel – Town Clerk; Mary Sargent – Zoning Admin; Mike Purcel – Chair – HPC; Senator Nader Hashim – Guest; Michael Gerber, Matt Nicholas, Barbara Trudeau – DV Stump Jumpers; Nancy Anderson – HMCA, Clarence Boston – Constable. *Note: Kate Kirkwood – SB Member was unable to attend this meeting but with Molly and Jeff there was a quorum, so the meeting was able to proceed.*

BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING:

Call to Order @ 6:05pm

Sign Guidelines of Conduct - Done

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: None

Scheduled Business (*Note: Times are approximate -early arrival-15-20 minutes- is suggested*):

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

6:11p Approval of Minutes from August 8, 2024 (Welch/Skramstad – passed unanimously)

6:11p Signature of Pay Orders - Done

New Business

Highway Department:

Highway Sand Bids – Andrew reviewed the sand bids he had received and noted that the bid he would like to use is a new supplier (Derrig Excavating). The new supplier is a bit more expensive (~\$2,000) for 3,000 yards, but still comes in under budget and Andrew noted that he feels that the materials from this supplier could help alleviate some of the town’s “mud season” issues. **Motion: Approve purchase of 3,000 of gravel/stone from new supplier (Derrig Excavating) per Road Supervisor Andrew Richardson’s recommendation. (Skramstad/Welch – Passed unanimously)**

Update on Garage Mold Remediation – Nick reported that he has been in touch with Catamount Environmental regarding their plans for the mold remediation at the garage, Catamount has us scheduled for the end of April 2025, once mud season has ended and the weather is conducive to the work. The Board and Andrew also discussed Catamount’s suggestion to use a hydrogen peroxide based spray (over the counter) to knock down the visible mold while waiting for complete remediation in the spring. Andrew noted that he was on board with this plan and Nick advised that he would get information on what materials to get to proceed and coordinate with Andrew.

Fill Open Position on Road Crew – Andrew noted that he has found a strong candidate for the open Road Crew position, named Jonathan Simon, who is local and has extensive experience working with heavy equipment. Andrew noted that he has a great work ethic and should be a solid fit. Andrew advised that he had interviewed him and was ready to offer him the position. Jonathan does not currently have a CDL but there is money in the budget to send him to CDL training. In addition, Jonathan has extensive experience with maintenance on John Deere equipment and it will be a huge benefit to have another strong maintenance experienced worker. Andrew said that we will start Jonathan at \$21/hr with a “bump” once he has his CDL. As the Board has previously given Andrew the independence to hire and as long as it all fits within his budget, the Board (who expressed no objections) does not need to pass a motion to approve this hire.

New Business – Highway Department: (continued)

Driveway Permits – Two driveway permits came before the Board this week from Ben Weinberg & Randy Brown. Andrew noted that he had done his sight visits and approved both permits. The Board reviewed the permit requests and proceeded to sign the permits so the work could move forward.

The Board signed the permits indicating their approval – no motion needed.

Note: As the meeting was moving quickly, and all people necessary for the Hogback discussions were not in attendance yet, the meeting moved to the Treasurer and Town Clerk items.

Treasurer & Town Clerk:

VMERS Recovery Plan – Rebecca reported that she has sent out the “VMERS Recovery Check” which brings the town into compliance with statute and will trigger VMERS to build out the retirement plans. Once this has been completed, they will advise and the next steps in the process can move forward.

Paid Holiday Policy – The meeting moved to a discussion of how the town needs to handle paid holidays, particularly how to handle holiday pay when the Road Crew is scheduled for 10-hour workdays. The Board discussed several options including holiday pay equaling the number of hours scheduled to work. Rather than go through many options at this time, the Board tasked Nick to write up a proposal with a couple of different options that will be discussed and decided on at the 9/3/24 meeting.

Building Maintenance –

- Town Office Emergency Generator – The town’s emergency generator, which was bought used, is really on its “last legs” and does have some significant costs for annual repair and maintenance. Continuing to do maintenance on the old generator, replacing it was considered and bids were acquired. At the same time, another option, a GMP “Battery Wall”, came to the attention of the Board and the other town officers. Nick reviewed the information he had received from GMP on the program. In short, GMP will install a “battery wall” at no charge; the town would sign a 15 year contract at a monthly charge of \$55/month for ten years; with no charge for the last five years of the contract; once the town requests, GMP will send one of their engineers to evaluate the best installation option; GMP also provides a list of vetted installers from which the town can choose from. The Board tasked Nick to continue to gather information and have GMP do their evaluation (note – there is no charge until everything is finalized and there is no upfront commitment of funds) and report back to the Board at the 9/3/24 meeting. *The sense of the Board pending final information this was the best way to proceed to ensure that in the case of power outage the Town Office would still be able to function.*
- Town Office Heater – The Office’s heater has reached the end of its functional lifespan. Forrest has spoken with the heating company and is in the process of getting a cost for replacing it. He noted that he should have the estimates by the next meeting. It was also noted that this replacement was accounted for in the 2024 budget.
- Heat/Air Exchange at the Garage – Forrest, Andrew, & Nick are working on this, as the current fan system is very old and not efficient at all at keeping the humidity in the garage to a minimum while also not losing heat during the winter. As with the Town Office heater above, this expense was also included in the 2024 budget and estimates for the replacement of this fan system are being sought.

Vermont 250th Anniversary Resolution – Forrest presented a request from the Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission for Marlboro to sign up with other Vermont towns to celebrate the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Signing up for this commission will require a town committee which the Board will work on constituting over the next few months. All agreed that this is worth signing on to.

Motion: Sign Marlboro up for the Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission. (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

New Business (continued)

Deerfield Valley Stump Jumpers (snowmobile club) January 2025 MLK Event @ the Hogback Quonset Hut site – The Stump Jumpers have requested to be able to hold an event on MLK weekend (or the two following weekends should there be weather issues) for their club with BBQ and a general gathering. The Stump Jumpers provided the appropriate facility use documents to the town, but before approval, the Board, the HPC, and the HMCA wanted to review the event plans and ensure that all efforts were and will be taken to follow the use of Hogback rules and regulations. Aside from the normal “stick to the VAST trails”, etc., the HMCA wanted to be sure that proper actions were being taken in terms of “open fires” and cleanup. Michael Garber of the DVSJ attended the meeting to hear what his organization needed to do. Nick noted that he had been in touch with the head of the HMCA and had a letter outlining their requests which the HMCA would like included with the Facility Use Forms being signed by DVSJ. Michael did make a request to be able to have a couple of fires (for warmth) in big drums. Nick advised that he would make some additions to the letter sent to the HMCA to deal with this and would send it to all parties to approve the final wording. It was generally agreed that if this could all be worked out by the end of September (9/26/24 meeting) that would work for all parties.

Senator Nader Hashim

Senator Nader Hashim, Marlboro’s representative in the Vermont State Senate, attended this week’s meeting to discuss important issues being handled in the Senate and to address any questions from the Board and/or any residents in attendance. *(Please note that the discussion continued for approximately 45 minutes. As these minutes are not a “transcript” of the meeting, should you wish to hear the full context of the questions and answers, the full discussion can be reviewed on the audio recording of the meeting available on the town’s Soundcloud page → <https://soundcloud.com/marlboro-select-board/2024-08-22-marlboro-select-board-meeting-part-1-audio> , time code: 0:53:30 to 1:33:00 .*

Senator Hashim noted that he served on both the Judiciary & Education committees, and in the next term should he be returned to the Senate in this year’s election, he should be chairing the Judiciary. A major issue for him is communication between Vermont towns and the State government and he is working hard to keep the lines of communication open.

Topics that Senator Hashim discussed (both his own points and also from questions from those in attendance):

- The need to work hard on dealing with the increased flooding Vermont has seen recently.
- Support for first responders.
- Hardening access to the internet (or other lines of communication).
- Working to upgrade the Vermont Judiciary to clear the extreme backlog of cases currently on the docket
- Many questions on the current situation with constantly increasing taxes.
- Other revenue sources (i.e., non-property-based taxes and non-resident property taxes).
- The increasing costs of education which can directly impact local property taxes.
- The high increases in Health Insurance costs.
- Discussion on current state of Vermont Law Enforcement on both the State & Local level, how to keep good people and attract new people into Law Enforcement.
- Figuring out the best way to efficiently and cost-effectively provide towns with the ability to communicate with State agencies in the case of an emergency (Flood, Blizzard, etc.).

The Senator spoke for about 40 minutes and the Board thanked him for his time and invited him to come back anytime and they really appreciated his availability. The Senator said that he would continue to make himself available to attend any meeting should he be requested to do so.

Zoning Administrator:

As part of a general effort to make the Zoning Administrator position with the town more efficient, the Board and the current Zoning Admin (Mary Sargent) have been working on creating a very specific job description and ensuring that such a description is able to be followed. Mary came with the Zoning Administrator job description in State Statutes and Nick provided several job descriptions from other Vermont towns. The town's current situation has the Zoning Admin doing many other tasks that are not directly under what would be considered the actual job description. In an effort to get a hold of the situation, the Board asked Mary to create a very specific list of her current overall duties. Once this list has been generated, the Board and Mary can review it and determine how to split up her tasks to create a much more effective and efficient one or two positions. The Board asked Mary to prepare this list in time for the 9/3/24 meeting, or at the latest, the 9/26/24 meeting, so solutions can be found. Mary agreed to develop this list.

Motion to move to Executive Session to discuss personnel issues @ 7:55p (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Motion to return to regular session @ 8:03p (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

Old Business

Town Administrator Report:

FEMA Update – Nick reported that the town was still waiting for a portion of the town's share of the repair costs of the roads caused by the July 2023 storms. The amount should be around $\frac{3}{4}$ of what the town was responsible for. Nick advised that he reach out to the State to see when the funds could be expected.

Status on Underground Electrical and Communication lines on Cowpath 40 – Nick reported that the Notice of Underground Lines had been filed and that the town was currently waiting on detailed plans from GMP on how the lines would be laid and waiting for information on what, if anything, Consolidated Communications would be doing and how it would be done to conform to all the conditions in the Notice.

Motion to Adjourn @ 8:05p (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)