

SELECTBOARD MEETING **APPROVED**

October 18, 2023

Attending the meeting; Merrily Lovell, Maggie Gordon, Mike Loner, Dennis Place, Paul Lamberson, Todd Odit, Joy Dubin Grossman, John Lyman, Adam Miller, James Donegan, Nicholas Baker, Andrea Morgante, Wayne Elliot.

Attending remotely; Phil Pouech, Margaret McNurlan, Katie Charbonneau, Alex Weinhausen.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. via zoom

Agenda Additions or Deletions

none

Public Comment

Phil commented about the concerns around the cost of GMT. He said GMT has an ongoing study for improving funding for all of Vermont Transit. This will come to the Transportation Committee of the Legislature, which he is a member of. He expects it to be submitted in January. GMT will begin initiating fares again, the Hinesburg Commuter will not charge a fare due to sharing with Middlebury. Phil noted ridership is still down. He would like to come back at a future meeting to discuss in more depth.

Approve Minutes of 10/4

Maggie moved to approve the minutes of 10/4 as amended. Seconded by Paul and approved with 5 yes votes.

Selectboard Forum

Merrily noted Todd gave a nice welcome at the ceremony for Kelley's Field II today.

There will be an ACT 250 meeting at Town Hall on 11/14 at 1 p.m. for Haystack Crossing / Black Rock.

Paul added compliments about the Kelley's Field II project noting it is so nice to see smart people doing the right things collaboratively. He also commented on the great relationship of Richmond Rescue with Hinesburg Community Police.

Request to Discuss Town's Interest in Purchase of Former Pump House Lot – James Donegan

Merrily noted the pump is not being used by the Town, it is in a flood hazard area, and subsequently James and his family are being billed for water use. Todd said James has called the question per the deed for the Town to either buy the property or execute a quit-claim deed.

James introduced Adam Miller from Pease Mountain Law who did the deed search on the lot prior to James and Sara purchasing the lot. James said Adam pointed out the option for the Town to buy the land for the agreed price of \$10.00 and if the Town does so, they would again receive free water from the Town.

Todd noted the lot is in the FEMA hazard area and has development restrictions and does not see any benefit to the community to retain the option to purchase.

Mike asked James if he hopes to farm the land again. James said he would like to explore if a house can be located there but would like to be free to use it for whatever they want to use it for.

Paul moved the Selectboard decline the option to purchase the property and proceed with the preparation and filing of a quit-claim deed for the same property. Seconded by Mike. Maggie asked if there is any long-term plan for use by the Town of the land. Todd said there is not. Dennis asked why the Town is not using the well. Todd said it is contaminated and has been totally closed and capped.

John Lyman asked if there is any value in reserving as open land. Todd said given the fact that the Town would then be providing free water to the farm and the house he feels there is no value to do that.

Motion voted and approved with 5 yes votes.

Presentation of FY 25 Fire Department Budget – Chief Baker

Nick reviewed the budget with the Board. He said other than the Capital Improvement Plan most is level funded.

Merrily asked about the increase in salaries for two full time and one part time employee. Nick said the increase is to stay competitive.

Todd said insurance opt-out payments have been moved to salaries which resulted in a decrease in the insurance line.

Mike asked if the call reimbursable is on target to meet the \$100,000. Nick said they are slightly under; it depends on participation.

Nick explained in the increase for wellness and fitness is the cost of employee physicals. Uniforms for EMS was consolidated in with the Fire Department uniform line.

Maggie asked if there is anything big coming up. Nick said it is not in the budget but there has been discussion on increasing staffing.

Paul asked about the budget process. If he feels the change in expense is too much is there anything we can cut back on? Todd said that has already been looked at and is done.

John commented that as the Town continues to grow call volume will also go up and is happy with the effort to retain employees and keeping equipment in shape as long as they can.

Todd explained the Board will continue to hear from Department heads and Committees. Late Dec and Jan the Board will take into consideration all they have heard and decide what they want to do and will eventually adopt a budget. There will be a warned public hearing for the first meeting in January.

Andrea noted the Public Hearing is one thing, but encouraged the Board to publicize the budget meetings and encourage participation. Merrily said they did that last year with little result and are trying to think of a better way to do it this year.

Update on WWTF Replacement Project – Wayne Elliot

Wayne reviewed the changes made and revised plans of the engineers to reduce the overall cost of the facility. Wayne said the engineering amendment draft has been submitted to the State.

Dennis confirmed that Aldrich & Elliott are not charging the Town for redesign. Wayne said that is correct, there is no charge for the work done over the summer which is about \$14,000 or \$15,000. Dennis asked why the sub-contractors have to be paid for work on the redesign. Wayne explained those are the engineering consultants working on the contract documents not the construction contractors.

Mike said it sounds to him like we are projecting the costs to be less than the bids by removing two phases of the project that we will still have to pay for at some point. Wayne said they have also removed about 1.3 million in costs with some of the value engineering. Wayne said it is the recommendation of the State to move them out as there are other funding sources to cover that.

Paul moved the Selectboard approve the engineering amendment to cover expenses resulting from the redesign of the project as well as the re-bidding of the project in the amount of \$124,000. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

Consider Approval of Municipal Planning Grant Application – Alex Weinhausen

Alex said the project they hope to do if awarded the grant is to hire a consultant to model future flooding and stormwater impacts using the existing base data we have and to look at rainfall estimates based on climate change projections and factoring the four large Village area developments.

Andrea said she supports the concept of this project which is an outgrowth of the Conservation Commission asking Planning Staff to have a consultant assess Patrick Brook with Haystack and Hinesburg Center II progressing. She feels the primary benefit will be looking upstream of Rt 116 and that culvert. She also feels this is an opportunity to make a management plan for the canal.

Paul moved to adopt the FY24 municipal planning grant resolution and authorize Town Staff to submit the application. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

Consider Acceptance of Sitework Engineering Contract for the Town Common – Alex Weinhausen

Alex said the Town Common Committee met last month and will be meeting again soon. They were encouraged to put out an RFP for original engineering and received two responses. One from Dubois and King and one from the team Park Architecture and Engineering Ventures. Dubois and King was the lower cost proposal.

Merrily said she is not comfortable voting on this tonight without having the documentation. Todd said the hope was they would. The Nov 1st meeting is a training which would mean this does not go before the Board again till mid-November. Alex said the decision is more about authorizing spending ARPA funds as previously discussed than choosing an engineering firm. Merrily said if the question is about use of ARPA funds, she is ok with a decision tonight.

Maggie moved to authorize Town Staff to use \$32,000.00 of ARPA funds toward engineering for the Town Common. Seconded by Paul and approved with 5 yes votes.

Consider Approval of Loan Documents for Highway Truck Purchase

This has been discussed and tonight the action is to approve the loan documents.

Mike moved the Selectboard approve the highway equipment note for the highway truck purchase. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

Report Back on GMTA Membership

Joy provided the Board with information on their question of how to withdraw from membership if they choose to do so.

Mike asked if the Town provides notice to withdraw and vote on that, can we then decide within that year not to withdraw.

This can be discussed further when Phil is on the agenda to discuss this.

Consider Approval of Letter of Support for a Transportation Alternatives Grant Application

Paul moved the Selectboard approve a letter of support for the TAP Grant Application. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

Town Manager Report

- Work to file the appeal of the discharge permit is underway
- The solar array on the landfill is finished
- Meeting with the consultants on the public safety report this Friday
- Water and wastewater position has been filled. Public Works Director position is the only vacant position.
- Budget status report for the first 3 months of the fiscal year shared with the Board
- The tax revenue is at this time a large amount because we do not owe the schools their money till after the Town due date.

Approve Warrants and Payroll

Merrily moved to approve the warrants, including payroll signed by herself and Maggie, as submitted by the Town Treasurer. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

Adjourn

Paul moved to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Spadaccini, Clerk of the Board