

Minutes
West Fairlee Selectboard Meeting
Monday April 7, 2014

Present: Beverly Ash, Cory Austin, Fred Cook, Marilyn Dresser, Delsie Hoyt
Visitors: Jonathan Blake, Sheila Bede

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Minutes: Bev Ash moved to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2014 regular meeting as presented; Fred Cook seconded; approved.

Visitors/ Reports of Town Officers and Committees

Sheila Bede of Creative Spirit Day Care (a Community Building tenant) wants to put in a water meter for her space here to document six months worth of water usage to support her zoning application for development of a property in the Town of Thetford. It was clarified that all expense associated with such a meter would be bourn by the tenant. After discussion, the Selectboard decided it requires additional information about what this entails and an estimate from a certified plumber. Bede also has gotten a grant to have a master gardener come in and help them set up a garden down by the swingset. She wants to put in several raised beds of vegetables and one of flowers. Bede was asked to defer the project until after the Town begins its own community-based process through a Municipal Planning Grant which will be looking at utilization of Town-owned property in the village center. It was acknowledged that Bede's project might dovetail with that planning work.

Vacancy appointments:

Fred Cook – Fence Viewer

Chuck Eaton – Grand Juror

Marilyn Dresser – Library Trustee

Marilyn Dresser made a motion to accept the slate of appointees to vacant positions; Bev Ash seconded; Approved.

Options for Lister positions: There has been no interest in the vacant Lister positions. Since at least two Listers are required by Statute, Delsie circulated information from PVR (Property Valuation and Review) about appointing a private assessor to work with current Lister, Janet Austin. The Town currently contracts with Vermont Appraisal Company (VAC) for a limited technical assistance time related only to reassessments, but they offer a more comprehensive package of services. A proposal has been requested from VAC.

Review Financial Statements

First Quarter Statements: Despite a severe winter, the salt budget is looking better than the last couple of years; and a healthy balance remains to purchase next winter's salt in the fall. Jonathan Blake noted that reserves of sand were depleted, Delinquent taxes are coming in, and revenues are better than last year.

Roads

Roads Posted as of March 21: Fred Cook moved to retroactively approve the road postings; Marilyn Dresser seconded; approved. They are posted to lower weight limits, and all overweight permits are suspended until May 15th or otherwise notified.

VTrans annual highway grant/structure grant for Crossroad Bridge – Estimates for paving as well as bridge guardrails and resurfacing are on the way.

Crossroad truck weight enforcement – Peter Garrow wrote to the DMV enforcement about overweight trucks on Crossroad. Both ends of the road are in Thetford, and are posted by them at regular weight limits with a sign that says no trucks as a deterrent. DMV is monitoring the traffic and providing enforcement. Lt. Cote of DMV Enforcement noted by email that if the posted limit is lower, they cannot selectively enforce weights, i.e. they cannot allow Town highway and trash contractors but exclude other truckers.

Preliminary Summer Roads Plan –

Crossroad: Before paving, two culverts need to be replaced. One, of larger diameter than may be sufficient, but it needs to be done well before the road is repaved to allow for compaction. There is a chronic pothole near the trailer park. Ditching and shoulder work required before repaving will address drainage in this area. The flat near the bridge requires fill (some of which was lost during Storm Irene). Blake noted that gravel removed to correct the grade around the Community Building could be re-used as fill. Kidderhood: Two culverts need to be replaced on Kidderhood. One is a driveway culvert that needs to be reseated. Significant hours are spent each winter digging out and thawing the culvert to avoid a washout, and proper replacement will avoid future expense.

Other culverts: Jennings Road and Scrabble Hollow Road each have a culvert needing replacement; two culverts on the upper section of Wild Hill should be replaced this summer in anticipation of paving that leg next year. A culvert on Back Street freezes repeatedly and is failing anyway, Blake suggested changing the pitch and depth of the new culvert to solve this chronic problem.

Wild Hill “Lang’s Hill”: While this section appears to be drying out quickly this year, it often takes the lion’s share of the Town’s gravel and stone budget. Several options have been discussed over the years with State officials; the cost of rebuilding of the road is prohibitive. Blake suggested trying out one of the suggested underdrain techniques on a limited section starting at the top of the hill.

Old Business

Update: Community Building window replacement – numbers are coming, next meeting we should have something to look at. LaValley's and Oakes are putting together equivalent packages.

Receipt of \$5,000 HAVA grant for Community Building – Town Clerk Rhonda Cook notified the Selectboard that the Town has been awarded the grant which will be used to

install ramps at the entrance and emergency exit of the Town Office and to improve handicap accessible parking close to the building..

Patch and paint of rental space – Terry Cook will look at it and give us an estimate; we may want to wait to do it until we're closer to getting a tenant in for cash flow reasons.

New Business

Review Ticket Issuing Officials – Beverly Ash, Corey Austin, and Delsie Hoyt will continue as ticket issuing officials. Ash is receiving additional training on technical aspects of judicial bureau tickets.

Update Local Emergency Operations Plan – minor corrections and additions were made. TRORC will incorporate the changes and have a final draft ready for signatures at the next meeting.

Memo from Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District- The new law in solid waste that our public building will need to have recycling containers beside every trash container by July of 2015; we already have residential recycling at no extra charge anyway, so we already meet that. We must have leaf and yard debris collection by July of 2016. And we must offer food scrap collection - composting - by 2017. There's a meeting April 17 at 6pm in Hartland that we should have someone go to, to start to pay attention to what we're going to have to do. Marilyn and Bev will go.

Overview of dog ordinance - A complaint was received by someone who didn't realize that the town had a dog ordinance. The dog ordinance was discussed, and it was decided that it should stand as is. It allows for a big enough penalty for the infractions defined in the ordinance to encourage people to obey it, unlike the self-executing state statutes in "The Big Book of Woof," which would apply if we did not have the ordinance.

Other Business/Agenda Items (to be acted on at next regular meeting)

April 21 Ron Rhodes/Joan Allen, Connecticut River Watershed Council would like to come to our next meeting and fill us in about grants and projects involving rivers which feed into the Connecticut, including the Ompompanoosuc.

Repainting the town signs was brought up. The person who constructed and painted them originally is unavailable, suggestions for other local sign painters was discussed

Bev Ash moved to sign the orders; Fred Cook seconded; approved.

Review Correspondence -

Survey on the public health impact of climate change - Delsie will fill it out and return it.

Better Back Roads grant application – The Town received this grant last year, and the project period has been extended into this year so the current grant is not yet closed out.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.