**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**Monday 6:00 PM, September 7, 2020**

**Town Hall – Selectboard Office**

**Attendance of Selectboard by Electronic Devices**

**Meeting being held electronically pursuant to 1 VSA 312, including The Legislature’s H.861 (2020) “Temporary Suspension of Designated Physical Meeting Location Requirements” (see attached)**

**Public, wishing to attend the meeting remotely were invited to email** [**townadmin@graftonvt.org**](mailto:townadmin@graftonvt.org)**, request to be invited to join in on the meeting on Microsoft Teams, and provide the email address to which the invitation should be sent. Instructions on connecting to the meeting accompanied the agenda. See agenda**

1. The Chair opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Present at the meeting electronically were:

Selectboard members: Chair Joe Pollio, Al Sands, Stan Mack, Cathy Siano-Goodwin, and John Gregory.

Others present: Galen Pinkham, Charles Bonin, Wendy Martin, Amber Stevens, Dottie Cannon, Michelle Dufort, Flo Lockerby, Bob Donald, Suzanne Welch, Bill Watson, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

1. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second John Gregory to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Minutes of August 17th and 31st. Al Sands had multiple edits to the minutes of August 17th which were applied to the minutes as made. Motion by Al Sands, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to amend the minutes as noted and to adopt them as amended. Motion passed unanimously. Minutes of August 31st: There were no edits. Motion by Stan Mack, Second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to adopt the August 31st minutes as presented. Al Sands abstained and the motion passed 4-0 with 1 abstention.
3. Warrants were all signed and presented at the meeting.
4. Highway report:
   * E911 Addresses – Anderson Road. Bill Kearns noted for the information of the Selectboard that all the addresses on the Grafton portion of Anderson Road would be changed to fit the Grafton standards for addressing. The address correction was suggested by the E911 Board and all the address changes were discussed with and approved by them. EMS requested that a sign denoting the town line between Rockingham and Grafton be erected. Danny Taylor said that could be done with a caveat that those signs tend to be stolen. Stan Mack asked that the letters to be sent include a request that the new addresses be posted by the property owner. Bill Kearns the letters would so address that issue and would be sent out Wednesday.
   * Operations:
     + Culvert on Stage Road was repaired.
     + The shoulders on Route 35, after the paving and culvert work earlier this season, were reshaped.
     + Danny Taylor worked with Al Sands on the preparation of parking area (rough) for the Village Park.
     + Mowing and hauling winter sand were carried out.
     + Bill Kearns has sent letters on tree limb trimming to the parcel owners on the Pickle St area of Route 121 East. They are to call and meet with Danny Taylor if they have questions about the extent, which was set forth in the letter, that is, 3 ft from the edge of pavement straight up. Being done for safety.
     + Paving on the section of Route 121 West from the schoolhouse to the top of the grade – the end of pavement. Danny Taylor received a bid of $65,000 for the job of repaving that whole section and believes it is the best solution for now and will last a while, as did the previous similar treatment years ago. John Gregory, Joe Pollio and Cathy Siano-Goodwin all expressed agreement of the need for this being done. The money would come from the paving reserve, still leaving $125,000 for the Ledge Rd area of Route 121 East for next year. Danny stated he will ask the paving contractor to send a letter proposal to Bill Kearns for approval. After further discussion and no disagreement, Cathy Siano-Goodwin moved to do the paving this year of the section of Route 121 West from the Schoolhouse to end of pavement at the top of the hill, and to authorize the Selectboard to sign the letter agreement for the paving at a cost of $65,000. Second by John Gregory. Motion passed unanimously.
5. Clerk/Treasurer Report. There was nothing to report.
6. Village Park work. Al Sands reported that he and Danny worked two days cutting trees and still have a few more “challenge” trees to bring down, and they will do that work tomorrow, as well as clean up saw logs. Al Sands said he had hoped Tim Morton would be on for the meeting to report on his estimate of the potential income from a log sale resulting from a conservative cut of the Village Park Forest as outlined by decisions of SB earlier this year. Tim was not on. Al Sands will try to get him on. When he is, this topic will be revisited. While working there he viewed some barberry treatment areas and they looked promising for eradication.
7. Temporary signs and State Law. Bill Kearns said the SB had been sent the State law and Secretary of State opinions. In short the State Law on political signs is applicable to town highways to the extent political signs may be in the Town Right of Way (ROW) for two weeks during a political campaigning and have to be removed the day after the election. Flo Lockerby asked that all signs should be treated the same and if political signs, other than the exception, are not allowed in the ROW no other signs, e.g., real estate signs, should not be allowed either. After discussion including input from Michelle Dufort, Joe Pollio, and Stan Mack to have no local law but follow the State Law, it was the consensus that the town should remind persons that they could post political signs on their own property outside the ROW at any time, but within the ROW they should follow the State law allowing them in town ROW for two weeks only and be removed after the election. All other temporary signs, including real estate signs, must be out of the ROW.
8. Cemetery Land - The Streeter family decided that the impact to the aesthetics of the area around their land was not foreseen and now they were aware of it and withdrew, with an apology, their offer of the land for the extension of Middletown Cemetery. Bill Kearns will follow up the request made of other landowners abutting other cemeteries.
9. Item 7 continued: Tim Morton entered the virtual meeting. He summarized the forest, the need for managing and select harvesting for the health of the forest, the species present, dominated by Hemlock, with Red Oak, Sugar Maple, Maple, and Ash. He commented on the soils – productive but shallow and that the future of the forest was weak due to lack of management. His strategy is to do a regeneration forestry cut, open the woods, and remove the Ash that are not healthy. The hemlock and Red Oak will be the subject of a market cut as they will be the future forest. Suzanne Welch asked about committee involvement. Al Sands said the committee made its suggestion two years ago and it is being followed. A map was put up and Tim went over it. Discussed limits of the Village parcel. Tim Morton can work up an estimate, and it will be a rough estimate, as the actual value is not knowable until bids come in and contract awarded. Suzanne Welch had concerns about the cut and wanted it returned to committee for advice. Al Sands made it clear this was all done two years ago and he was proceeding with that plan or the town could find another to lead the effort. Joe Pollio state the SB has decided to move forward and would not go back to the beginning. Suzanne still had concerns about noise, timing and the village nearby. Tim Morton addressed all those, reminding that this would be winter work and the most impactful activity – log hauling through town – could be monitored and timed to have least impact. Amber Stevens raised concerns about VAST trails and access and tim answered her concerns, though he stated there may be short periods when access would not be allowed. Tim Morton that there could be conditions for VAST in the contract agreement for the logger. He said he would prefer to allow for two winters to accomplish the operation in the offer, as the limit to this winter would affect good loggers whose calendars are full this season. Selectboard agreed. Al Sands made the motion, second by Al Sands, to give tim Morton permission to move forward with his work to prepare the sale docs, and Al Sands will work with him. Motion passed unanimously.
10. Town Hall Work: Stan Mack outlined the work being planned and proceeding:
    * The Insulation proposal for the work under the offices is in an email which will be forwarded to Selectboard. There are some choices to be made.
    * Heat pumps are ordered.
    * The sealing of the basement floor will proceed.
11. Event Form: After a long discussion, including concerns raised by Bob Donald on behalf of businesses in Town that such an local regulation could be a real hardship on them, the Selectboard decided that it was not doable to design a suitable local regulation and, even if it could, there is no good way to enforce it. There could be some guidelines based on the State orders and Guidelines which the SB could advertise and remind the residents to follow. Stan Mack and Rich Thompson would work on them and provide suggestions on the guidelines to the SB for discussion.
12. Settle on a time foe Selectboard Meetings. Decided to leave it at 6:00 PM to be user friendly for residents, especially those who work.
13. Selectboard meeting when Monday follows on a holiday. After a long discussion, moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Stan Mack to move a Selectboard meeting that falls on a holiday to the next day, Tuesday. When called the motion passed 3 to 2, with Joe, Cathy and Stan voting yes, and John and Al voting no.
14. Discuss meeting with BDCC,
    * Yes, arrange for BDCC to make a presentation and answering questions some meeting this month.
    * Letter from VSP concerning Police / Community discussion. Bill Kearns will send the letter to Grafton news for publication and inform LT. French that the letter will be published, and then he would receive responses from residents and then communicate with the LT on possible community meeting or other discussion.
15. Other Business: None.
16. Public Comment: None
17. Date of Next Selectboard Meeting: September 21, 2020 at 6 PM.
18. Adjourn to executive session– 7:53 PM Motion to adjourn to executive session by Al Sands, second John Gregory. Motion passed unanimously.
19. Motion to exit executive session at 8:09 PM by Al Sands, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin. Motion passed unanimously.
20. No action taken. Motion to adjourn at 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted

William G. Kearns, Town Administrator