**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****, 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, Chris Wallace, Jennifer Stromsten of BDCC, Suzanne Welch, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

1. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Al Sands, second John Gregory to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Approve Minutes: September 7, 2020. Stan Mack made several minor changes and Bill Kearns edited, and as edited motion was made by John Gregory, second by Stan Mack to adopt the minutes as edited. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Warrants had been signed by all Selectboard members and were presented to the meeting.
4. Discussion with Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation Jennifer Stromsten addressed the Selectboard, presenting the Program of the BDCC to serve the people of Windham Region and in particular the programs addressed to our local economy. They use the money provided by the Towns of the Region to leverage into grants worth much more to serve all the communities of Windham County. Their current programs include assisting small business secure funding, the high school to work/job programs and the working lands for agriculture and housing. She highlighted the trade aspect of their high school program, trades as a real alternative to college education, and often more lucrative in the experience of VT residents. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked what the BDCC is doing for Grafton. She pointed to their community grant writing project and assistance and training, though which the BDCC foster direct contact with funding organizations, The schools program, which for the time being is struggling because of virtual schooling due to COVID-19, and recognizing the source of jobs for Grafton and helping foster more closer to the community, and working with businesses to get the work out to local residents about employment opportunities other not well known. Rich Thompson, Grafton fire chief is a teacher in the tech school at Brattleboro and praised the work of BDCC with students, not only training, but tremendous help in job search and introducing potential employees to employers. Joe Pollio questioned her about work in town especially the Foundation and would they help with Act 250 should an amendment be applied for at the Ponds. Yes, they do work with WF, especially her boss whom she will inform about the Act 250 permit potential amendment. Joe Pollio thanked Jennifer for appearing and she asked that we stay in contact with her with needs the BDCC could help with.
5. Highway Report
	* Report - E 911 changes on Anderson Rd. – delayed till November. Bill Kearns announced that due to the elections E911 Board advised no address changes until after Nov 3, 2020.
	* Paving on Route 121 W – completed and the job was well done.
	* Operations
		+ Mowing almost complete.
		+ Now doing work on Cabell Rd for the Better Roads Grant, hydrologically connected roads.
		+ Village Park work done on new entrance and almost complete with the preparation of the parking/landing.
		+ Someone was in the Garage on the weekend, left lights on and some doors to vehicles open.
6. Clerk/Treasurer Report
	* November Election site. Elections will be held in the Brick Church per decision of the BCA just prior to this meeting.
	* The Town has received a grant for digitizing our town records, which will be made available to the public on-line beginning as early as October 13th. On questioning from Joe Pollio Kim Record made it clear that part-time staff would be scanning the documents and there was a deadline to complete the scanning in November this year. When done, lawyers and the public will be able to search 40 years of records on-line.
	* Sullivan Powers, our auditors, had staff here last Monday and finished the work that day, because most of the info was sent to Sullivan Powers prior to the meeting and just needed to follow up with specific questions while here.
	* John Gregory asked about the discovered $92,000 surplus belonging to the Athens/Grafton School still in the WNESU. Kim recounted what had occurred and her bringing it to the attention of the new business manager, who confirmed that it would be credited in the next budget to Athens/Grafton. John opined that we are paying $92,000 more in taxes than we otherwise should be. Also, re school: divorce from merger. School Board is looking into it.
	* Finally, worksheets for budget will be sent out to Board in October.
7. Brick Meeting House/Church; Use for Town Public Meetings. The brick Meeting House Committee has a desire to all the Town to use the meeting house for any purpose it wishes to. This comes at a time that Joe, among others, wants to meet in person for, among other things, the budget discussion and this building would work because of the size of the interior. The building is also Handicap Accessible. Cathy Siano-Goodwin stated that she liked the idea. Al Sands prefers the town hall that we have been restoring. Kim Record noted the TH is not HC accessible and the restoration had more to do with upkeep of the building for its current use as offices – addressing radon, insulation, upkeep - not as preparation to hold meetings upstairs. It was agreed the use of this building by the Town would be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
8. Village Park:
	* Progress on preliminary preparation of landing/parking area. Initial cutting of the trees and shaping the land for an entrance and parking are/ log landing off Fire Pond Road is almost complete. The public on its own is free to check out the work on their own.
	* Site clearing – cut trees, sale to highest bidder, ad in Grafton news. Al Sands will help prepare the bid docs and set a date for viewing the trees that are being sold for firewood, subject to conditions including removal of logs by Oct 30th for processing elsewhere – no processing on site. Motion by Stan Mack, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to sell the firewood quality logs, advertise in Grafton news, the ad will set a date for viewing and a date certain for bids to be returned to Town Hall. Motion passed unanimously.
	* Logging. The forester has today finished marking the trees for the log sale. The public is welcome to view the markings on their own. The report from Tim Morton will be discussed at the next board meeting.
9. Informal Response to PCs informal communication of proposed amendments to Town Plan: Joe Pollio asked if all had reviewed the proposed edits by PC and if there were comments. Al Sands said he had read them, attended the meeting when edits were proposed, and they had done all that we had asked of them and more. Each of the members of the Selectboard stated they agreed the PC had done what was requested.
10. Quick informational announcement by Water Wastewater Committee. Suzanne Welch, Chair of the Committee started they have prepared a survey which they will circulate to residents of Grafton for their response. The survey and its circulation will be published in the Grafton News. The committee wanted to bring that to the attention of the Selectboard before the News came out. The committee wants to meet with the Selectboard as part of the survey process. The Selectboard members thanked her for the information and had no problem with the survey.
11. Other Business. None
12. Public Comment. Al Sands if there was to be a Selectboard Report for this issue of the News. Joe Pollio stated his regrets for not having written a report of the News in the past few months and stated there would be one in October issue.
13. Date of Next Selectboard Meeting: October 5, 2020 @ 6PM
14. Motion by Stan Mack, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to adjourn at 7:14 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

William G. Kearns, Town Administrator