**MINUTES SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**Regular – Via Microsoft Teams**

**Very Limited “Live” attendance upstairs Town Hall**

**Monday, May 3, 2021 @ 6:00 PM**

Present at the meeting in Town Hall were Joe Pollio, Cathy Siano-Goodwin, John Gregory, Sue Allen, and Suzanne Welch.

Persons present in the Hall: Dottie Cannon, Joan Lake, Al Sands, Bob Donald, Kevin Wolfe, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, and Town Administrator Bill Kearns.

Persons present on Microsoft Teams: Charles Bonin, Amber Stevens, Wendy Martin, Galen Pinkham, Tim Morton town Forester, and Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer

Also present: FACT8 TV.

1. Call to order. The Chair called a meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Sue Allen, to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Minutes of Selectboard meeting May 3, 2021. Suzanne Welch moved to include that letter to VTrans (see item 9. In the May 3 minutes) as part of the minutes. Motion was seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Highway Report
   * Certification of Road and Bridge Standards. The Selectboard was requested to Certify that the Road and Bridge Standards adopted and upheld by the Town of Grafton meet State standards. Motion by Sue Allen to so certify and execute the Certification and send it to VTrans. Cathy Siano-Goodwin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The Selectboard member executed the Certificate at the meeting.
   * Gravel and Stone: XL sheet listing gravel and stone and prices. Danny Taylor reviewed the XL sheet with the Board and answered questions. He further stated the two lowest costs were with Cersosimo and P&L’s Eastman pit, the two closest sources. John Gregory stated in making the request he just wanted a comparison in order to know the costs that were out there. He was thus satisfied with the comparison. Suzanne Welch requested a cost for delivered materials from Eastman. Danny Taylor stated he would request that of Palmer Goodrich.
   * Other:
   * Paving Grant for Route 121 was awarded to the Town - $240,000 estimated cost, $200,000 grant money, the roughly $40,000 match would be covered by the Town approximately ½ in kind and ½ in cash. Because of energy costs rising the price may be high in which case, if the bid prices are prohibitive, the Selectboard can decide whether or not they wish to proceed with the project this year. Danny Taylor and Bill Kearns asked the Selectboard wished them to put the project out to bid. Motion by Suzanne Welch, Second John Gregory to put the project out to bid. Motion passed unanimously.
   * Salt – Danny Taylor stated that sat prices are going to be higher shortly and probably next year. Now the price paid all year by the Town was available and he had surplus money in his budget for Salt, thus he ordered more salt, 300 ton, at a cost of $21,000 of the remaining $23,000 in the salt budget.
   * Budget adjustments:
   * Hydro-seeder. The State is now strongly enforcing its requirement that cleaned ditches be hydroseeded within three days of ditching. A hydro-seeder costs about $9,000, but he could build a better one for $2,500. He has in his sand budget still $26,000 surplus for this fiscal year. He will use $2,500 from the sand budget to buy the parts and materials he needs to build a hydro-seeder in order to meet the states requirements.
   * Culverts are going up in cost dramatically as much as 3x the recent cost. He proposes to take the remaining sand budget surplus and purchase culverts for this summer’s work and beyond.
   * Motion by Suzanne Welch, second John Gregory to authorize Danny Taylor to purchase the additional culverts and to build the hydro-seeder as stated above, using the surplus sand budget funds for each item. Motion passed unanimously.
   * GIA logging was not to use the Ledge road and thus the Access Permit was cancelled, and the $500 deposit refunded. However, the road was used and repairs to stone-lined water bars must be made. Danny Taylor and Bill Kearns will contact GIA and the loggers, have them look at the road and fix the road before weather makes the damage worse.
   * Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked about the guardrails on Chester Rd and their repair. Danny Taylor said he has asked Lafayette to come, look at the dame, and give an estimated for repairs.
5. Clerk/Treasurer
   * Dog license – deadline and penalty discussion. From the list we have of dogs registered last year and without surveyi8ng to see if there are fewer dogs or more dogs and owners, from that list there are 8 owners who have not licensed their dogs this year. Many of those 8 owners have multiple dogs. Mike Waysville will be given the list to follow up on. Related to this is the late fees for licensing issue. The COVID-19 Disaster Declaration does not permit late fees to be assessed until the failure to license occurs during the 90 days following the ending of the Disaster Declaration.
   * Property Taxes are due today. Those not fully paid are delinquent with an 8% late fee.
   * Reminder to BCA of the webinar on Thursday on their role in assessment hearings.
   * With regard to the re-assessment and those raising issues with their assessment values, the process is: Ask for informal hearing, if not satisfied with result, grieve the assessment to the BCA for an appeal hearing.
   * School votes on Members of the School Board \_ Westminster votes on June 29th, Grafton and Athens will vote -Australian Ballot - August 31st.
   * Kim Record was asked about the Warrant for the Sheriff contract and she explained the Sheriff bill’s each month at $408 dollars, which we pay in advance. Joe Pollio reminded the Board that the Sheriff contract comes up each year and can be discussed and possibly renegotiated at that time.
6. Professional auditor – re-engage Sullivan Powers, seek proposal for this year. The Selectboard agreed that the auditor’s re-engagement without going out to bid met the exception in the Purchase Policy, and they recognized that should it go out to bid there would likely be no saving from the current auditor’s proposal, and therefore they would welcome Sullivan Powers proposal. Motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second john Gregory not to send the professional auditor contract out to bid but invite Sullivan Powers proposal. Motion passed unanimously.
7. Park Committee - Discussion and decision of Logging Operation this summer instead of this winter. Bill Kearns at this time asked the Selectboard to take up the issue of logging the park this summer, rather than this coming winter, which was a request from Long View who had been awarded the logging contract. That contract requires winter logging only. He asked this because Tim Morton was on the meeting and was promised the item would be moved up on the agenda. The Chair recognized tim Morton to open this discussion. Tim Morton stated the issue: Should we or should we not log the Park in the summer. He further stated:
   * The high bidder wishes to log this summer, but contract calls for winter only logging
   * Though he originally was of the opinion because of the wetness of the site winter logging only was needed, he has discovered the site is not as wet as he first believed,
     + winters are a lot different today than 5 years ago, with good chance of warmer winter weather and several thaws which would not allow continuous logging operation and result in more damage to forest floor,
     + since the contract has been awarded Tim knows the quality of the logger and the equipment used reducing the potential for damage to the forest floor, good crews such as Long View and good equipment including pads for protecting soils could be used,
     + the trucking is better and more reliable in summer than in winter,
     + getting to the EAB infected trees sooner is a good thing, and
     + if the summer happened to be too wet, the logger could return in the winter to finish.

For all these reasons he is now of the opinion that the summer logging would be permissible.

Sue Allen asked about the impact on the Inn. Tim Morton said operations were between normal business hours Monday – Friday 6 AM to 7 PM. He then calculated the number of truck trips at 50 over 2 months or less than one per day. Bob Donald, Exec of the Windham Foundation noted that normal business hours included very early operations and the potential for truck traffic past the Inn at 6 AM. Tim Morton noted that with the change in the winter only restriction other conditions could be added to the contract. Kevin Wolfe stated that COVID-19 had been hard on businesses in Town, we do not need more trucking through town. Al sands found Tim’s opinion on the summer logging interesting, but stated winter logging with ground frozen was better. Al Sands added that some suggested better pricing, but the price is set by the contract. Tim Morton then stated the price increases did not reach down to the logger level. Joe Polio stated winter is best and stated his experience on his own land. Tim Morton stated winter only logging is not sustainable for the logging industry in Vermont.

At the end of the discussion Suzanne Welch moved that we keep the no winter logging condition in the contract. Cathy Siano-Goodwin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Tim Morton asked if there would be discussion concerning the map. Joe Pollio stated that would be on the agenda for June 7, 2021. Al Sands wanted to discuss the potential Village septic/sewer leach field in the park, but the Selectboard agreed further discussion on that was premature.

1. E-911 – Anderson Rd. Change of all addresses to E-911 standards. Bill Kearns explained that the State E911 Board asked that Anderson Rd be addressed to the same standards used for the rest of the Town, i.e., on the 5.28 ft standard, rather than the 528 ft standard. Bill stated he had worked with State E911 personnel to determine the new addresses. He had the letters to owners, to E911, VTel, US Postal Service, Fire and Rescue, Dispatch centers all prepared to be sent on May 18. The effective date of the change would be June 14, 2021. After a short discussion it was moved by John Gregory, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to re-address Anderson Road per the Town standards for E911 addressing. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Trash Cleanup Rte. 121 W - Cathy Siano-Goodwin stated that Peter Heyniger told her the crew, for various reasons, was smaller than usual, and that this crew would do the three smaller dup areas, primarily if not all on Ruegger property, on June 5. As for the main illegal dumpsite, it is on Sheehan property and he had not yet given permission for entry onto the site to clean it up. The Sheehan site would take two dumpsters. GIA might help with cost if Town would assume some of the cost. Cathy stated the flaggers should also be paid at $18.00 per hour. Peter Heyniger had gotten a reduced price for the dumpsters. Cathy suggested the Town agree to contribute $800 for the dumpsters plus pay the flagger. It was then moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Suzanne Welch, to contribute $800 toward the cost of two dumpsters and in addition pay the flagger at $18.00 per hour for clean-up of the Sheehan property on the two conditions that 1. GIS match that amount, that is, contribute an additional $800 for the dumpster and share the cost of the flagger and 2. Sheehan grant written permission for the Heyniger crew to enter the land and clean up the Sheehan dump site. Discussion included the Board directing that a letter be sent to Sheehan to allow the clean-up by this group by giving them permission to enter the property and clean it up, or Sheehan clean the site up.
3. Committee Reports:
   * Highway committee –
     + ROW Access Policy and Update on Walker Bridge Project. This was discussed at length, and at the end it was decided to leave the Access policy as it is. Furthermore, it was moved by Suzanne Welch, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to rescind the motion made at the Selectboard meeting on April 19, 2021, namely “Suzanne Welch moved, second by John Gregory to declare it to be Town Policy that the only items allowed in the Town Right of Way are mailboxes, drives and culverts. Motion passed unanimously.” That motion to rescind passed unanimously. As to that same bridge that was the subject of the discussion, that is, the bridge on Cabell Rd. Danny Taylor stated it would appear that the AASHTO standards and VTrans standards would require sweep guardrails at both ends and on both sides of the bridge because of the danger of vehicles of falling into the river due to steep and tall slopes. Danny will have Lafayette give an estimate on those guardrails as well as those on Chester RD. mentioned above.
     + Walker Bridge – The committee members john Gregory and Suzanne Welch had a discussion with VTrans. In that discussion it was disclosed that the $85,000 in COVID caused use of outside engineers, at a cost of $85,000, should have been reflected in the estimate of the current cost estimate, which is, with the $85,000 included, $5.136M. the committee asked Carolyn Cota to get relief from that $85,000 COVID caused expense, and VTrans is looking into that.
     + Joe Pollio wants VTrans to provide us with their analysis of the costs of the Bridge and an estimate of the costs that they promise will not go up.
   * Parks committee –
     + PACIF items regarding Village Park, Pump Park and Pond on Ret 121 W. the Parks Committee will meet with PACIF soon to go through the matters that have been seen to and those that still need attention.
     + As for the handling of donations and expenditures at the Park, Kim Record will seek advice of Sullivan Powers and get back to the Board.
   * Personnel – nothing offered or discussed
   * Buildings committees.
     + Elevator project progress. Bill Kearns gave an update. Still working on funding and on the type needed. Bill invited persons in the Town to donate the money for the entire project and put their name on the elevator!
     + Town Hall upstairs – clean out. Set a date for staging “stuff” and viewing “stuff “  
        by the public, a deadline to remove stuff, and a date to clear the upstairs of all “stuff”: Kim Record asked for time for herself and listers to go through files and maps before tossing. Committee will arrange a schedule per Sue Allen. Bill Kearns stated he had removed the old parcel maps with orthophotos and put them in the map drawers in his office.
   * Water-Wastewater Commission. Suzanne Welch stated that Charles Bonin declined to act as administrator with regrets. The committee has asked that the Selectboard appoint Diana Lawrence. Suzanne Welch then nominated Diana Lawrence to membership on the Commission and be Administrator. After discussion, Sue Allen seconded the nomination and by unanimous vote Diana Lawrence was appointed member of the Commission and Administrator of the Water-Wastewater Commission.
4. Public Comment. There was none.
5. Other Business. There was none.
6. Date of Next Regular Meeting – June 7, 2021 @ 6:00 PM.
7. Adjourn. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Cathy Siano-Goodwin at 8:12 PM, second Suzanne Welch. Motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Kearns