

MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING

Grafton Town Hall Upstairs In Person/Live

With accommodation for persons unable to attend in person via interactive Microsoft Teams

Monday, November 15, 2021, 6 pm

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

Selectboard: Joe Pollio, John Gregory, Cathy Siano-Goodwin and Suzanne Welch.

Also: Dottie Cannon, Don Dougall, Scott Hitchcock, Joan Lake, Kim Record (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Dave Rogers, and Wendy Martin.

Present online: Charlie Bonin, Amber Stevens, Hardy Merrill, Nancy Merrill, and Fact8TV.

1. Call to order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Adopt Agenda: Joe Pollio asked that the agenda be amended so that the executive session could occur at the end of the meeting. It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve minutes of the November 1, 2021 meeting. Suzanne Welch noted that Mike Field requested that under Number 9 in the Parks Committee section, the sentence that included "...were not actual cost estimates" be changed to "He also clarified that the cost estimates for trailwork included in the ERSA grant assumed outside contractor costs, not town equipment/personnel cost levels." It was then moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to accept the minutes of the November 1, 2021 meeting as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Highway Report:

- Paving projects. Road foreman Danny Taylor wasn't present. John Gregory said that they had met with the program delivery manager for FEMA to see what the Town needed to do to get the projects started; she's coming in on November 18 to go over everything and they'll go from there. Pollio said that the paving on Route 121 past Beck Bridge had been completed. Gregory said there was a bad spot on the left side right after the bridge and something will be done about it. Pollio asked how the board wanted to proceed on the invoice received for the Townshend Road paving: the options are fight it, pay, or pay half. After a brief discussion, it was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin to pay the actual bill of \$26,230.24. Motion passed unanimously.
- Guardrails. Gregory said they were cancelled out for the scheduled day and rescheduled for November 29.
- Act 250 Application Pre-Hearing Conference at former CIC building. Suzanne Welch said the pre-hearing had taken place on November 8 with 11 people in attendance, including three property owners who registered as parties to the process. She said she would report further during the executive session portion of the meeting. The next hearing is scheduled for December 3 at 9:30 am. Joe Pollio and John Gregory will represent the Selectboard. She said there had been a number of questions about the remediation of the CIC building and the group also met with an employee who works in the building. Welch spoke with Town health officer Rich Thompson about updating him, which could be done at the next Selectboard meeting.
- Miscellaneous. Siano-Goodwin asked about painting the lines in Houghtonville, which hasn't been done yet. Pollio said the Town had no control over what is painted or not. Welch said that she and Taylor had talked

about hearing from people about how slick the new pavement on Route 121 is. Taylor told her that he thought it was slick because it's so new, with a smooth surface. He's certain the surface will become courser and less slick after more wear and tear. Gregory pointed out that the entire route from Walker Bridge to before Cambridgeport Bridge is subject to black ice with lack of sunlight. Welch asked if a sign should be installed and Pollio asked how the Town would know where the black ice would be and when.

5. Clerk/Treasurer Report. Town Clerk Kim Record told the board that VTel had paid the Town back for the \$800 worth of damage it had caused to the culvert on School Street. Delinquent taxes are down to around \$5,000; interest on late taxes will be charged, beginning the next day (November 16). Record said she planned to bring the Delinquent Tax Policy to the board at the next meeting. She would like the policy to change to align with how interest is posted vis-à-vis regular taxes.

6. Committee Reports:

• Cemetery Committee: Joe Pollio said he had driven around to view the cemeteries, which were in good shapes except that leaves have not been cleaned up. The board had received an estimate from Ivor Stevens for \$5,000 for fall cleanup. (Amber Stevens told the board that it would not exceed \$5,000.) Record told the board the town was probably under its budget at this point. If \$5,000 were taken out now, that would leave \$2,000 for the rest of the fiscal year (through June 30, 2022). There was a discussion about doing the cleanup now vs. including it in spring cleanup.

At this point in the meeting, Cathy Siano-Goodwin opened the sole bid for Cemetery Maintenance, which was submitted by Ivor Stevens Grounds Maintenance for \$24,000 from May 1 through October 31. After discussion, Amber Stevens said the bid included spring and fall cleanup. There was a discussion concerning the difficulty of finding employees vs. hiring the work out to a contractor. It was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by John Gregory to hire Ivor Stevens Grounds Maintenance to do the fall cleanup for \$5,000 and award the Cemetery Maintenance bid of \$24,000 to Ivor Stevens Grounds Maintenance. Motion passed unanimously. The company will also clean up items left at gravesites. There was discussion concerning the need for a sexton and Kim Record said that stipend would have to be included in the budget. Pollio asked if the Town had received all the cemetery records in Don Lawrence's possession as former cemetery agent; Kim Record said she had sufficient records and she has the maps as well.

• Highway Committee: No report.

• Parks Committee: No report.

• Personnel Committee: No report.

• Buildings Committee: Pollio said the heat pumps are still on backorder and the architects are working.

• Wastewater-Water Committee: Pollio said the board had received the contract from Tighe & Bond. He said that he, Bill Kearns, and Suzanne Welch would attend a Zoom meeting the next day with the state; the Town's attendance was requested by Tighe & Bond.

7. Planning Commission Status. Pollio noted that no one from the Planning Commission had showed up at this meeting and that asked where the commission stood at this time, with no chair and down one member. John Gregory asked who had been invited and Pollio said that Bill Kearns had contacted the board but didn't say which members had been contacted.

8. Other Business: Suzanne Welch said that Christmas in Grafton was scheduled for December 11 and that it

was going to be a fabulous event. She asked Kevin Wolfe to attend the next Selectboard meeting to inform the board.

8. Public Comment:

Amber Stevens said the fire department would be selling Christmas trees during the first week of December and that there was a Christmas tree deficit in general this year.

9. At 6:42 pm, it was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to go into Executive Session to discussion Personnel Matters and possible litigation. The reason for the executive session is more fully set forth in the attachment "Act 250 Prehearing Conference...Report". Motion passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8 PM. Cathy made the motion and John was the second. As a result of the meeting, the Board will post a notice of an opening on the Board and the appointment will be until March Town Meeting. That person or persons who are interested please contact Bill at the selectmen office by December 1st.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Martin

See attached "Act 250 Prehearing Conference, Hitchcock Firewood, Selectboard Report November 15, 2021."

**Act 250 Prehearing Conference, Hitchcock Firewood, Selectboard Report
November 15, 2021**

The Act 250 Amendment Application, Pre-Hearing Conference was held on November 8, 2021 at the site of Hitchcock Firewood, LLC, 3992 Rt 121 E Cambridgeport, VT.

Purpose of the Pre-Hearing Conference was to begin considering an application for an Act 250 amendment to an existing permitted commercial/industrial property for an outdoor firewood processing business.

11 in attendance, including:

- Aaron Brondyke, State Coordinator, Natural Resources Board.
- 2 District Environmental Commissioners, including the Chair;
- Heather and Scott Hitchcock, business owners, Hitchcock Firewood, LLC and their attorney;
- John McKay, building owner,
- 3 property owners who registered as "parties" to the proceedings, and
- I represented Town of Grafton as a member of Selectboard.

For this meeting's minutes, I am providing a complete list of names and affiliations to Wendy.

Pre-hearing consisted of Q&A by participants, a demonstration of the log cutting and loading equipment to monitor its noise level, on-site visit to property owners' home to monitor noise level at that location. Pre-hearing participants were sworn in for this portion of the pre-hearing.

I'll report on this aspect of the pre-hearing conference in executive session, pursuant to Vermont Title 1, Section 313, 1E), matters pertaining to possible or pending civil litigation.

Hearing will be held on December 3, 9:30AM, Town Hall and MS Teams. Joe and John will represent Selectboard at the Hearing. I will attend, but I will not participate.

One Final Point: During Q&A at beginning of Pre-Hearing, there were a number of questions pertaining to the status of the remediation of the CIC building in general and Matrix Chem specifically. Cheap Tubes. Spoke with Rich Thompson – suggest scheduling an update with Rich at future Selectboard meeting.

over - list of participants

Participants, Act 250 Pre-Hearing Conference, November 8, 2021

Aaron Brondyke, State Coordinator, Natural Resources Board, Act 250

Cheryl Cox, District #2 Environmental Commission

Tom Fitzgerald, Chair, District #2 Environmental Commission

Heather and Scott Hitchcock, Hitchcock Firewood, LLC

George McNaughton, attorney representing Hitchcock Firewood, LLC

John McKay, CIC building owner

Silas Roberts, adjoining property owner

Pam and Patrick Spurlock, property owners

Suzanne Welch, Grafton Selectboard