**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**Grafton Town Hall Upstairs In Person/Live**

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

**Monday, April 4, 2022, at 6:00 PM**

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

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

Also: Dottie Cannon, Joan Lake, Patrick Cooperman, Liisa Kissel, Sam Battaglino, Rodney Record, Mary Feder, Russell Record, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer, and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

On-line: Jack Bryar, Hardy Merrill, Charles Bonin, Nancy Merrill, Wendy Martin, Fact8 TV.

1. Call to order at 6:00 PM
2. Adopt Agenda: Motion by Suzanne Welch, second John gregory to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Minutes of Selectboard meeting March 21, 2022. Suzanne Welch noted that in the discussion on the Personnel Policy and Harassment training there was a motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second John Gregory to remove the requirements for Harassment Training from Addendum C. Motion passed 4-1. Motion by John Gregory, second Suzanne Welch to adopt the minutes of March 7, 2022, as amended. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Highway Report. Danny Taylor gave the report.
   * Open Truck bids: 2023 Tandem Axle Truck. There was only one bid. Bill kearns stated the Invitation to bid was published in the VT Journal, and sent to 5 dealers, one sent in a bid, one sent a refusal (R.R. Charlebois). The one bid received was opened by the Select Board Clerk Rich Thompson, who read the bid particulars, which were Total price – $233,720, less trade-in at $70,000, plus warranty $11,694 for a bid price of $175, 414. Danny Taylor will review the bid for the Selectboard and bring it back for approval.
   * FEMA meetings – status of Recovery. Meeting last week, none today. FEMA has most of the data, and the team will meet next Monday.
   * Fed Aid Hwy – Rte. 121. $70,000 in repairs approved, and we are to be reimbursed circa $63,000. See Agreement item below.
   * Excess Weight Permits: Jamie Gregory Trucking and Excavating; Wind River Environmental, Inc; Casella Construction Inc; Wilson & Lawrence; Cota and Cota and Beacon Sales Acquisition. Motion John Gregory, second Suzanne Welch to approve these weight permits and authorize the Town Administrator to sign and issue. Motion passed unanimously.
   * Emergency Repairs FHWA Agreement, VTrans TA60, and VTrans Compliance Certification Road and Bridge Standards.
     + Emergency Repairs FHWA Agreement. Bill Kearns had sent the entire agreement to the Selectboard earlier last week and now asked that the agreement be adopted by the Selectboard and that he be authorized to execute the agreement for the Town. This is the agreement for the $70,000 in repairs mentioned above and will result in the Town receiving $53,000 reimbursement for the repairs made to this Federal aid highway. Motion John Gregory, second Suzanne Welch to adopt the agreement and authorize bill kearns to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town.
     + VTrans TA60 – Annual Grafton highway budget provided to VTrans. Bill Kearns asked that it be executed by every member of the Selectboard so that he can send it to VTrans. TA60 was signed by all.
     + VTrans Compliance Certification Road and Bridge Standards. Bill Kearns asked that it be executed by every member of the Selectboard so that he can send it to VTrans. Certification was signed by all.
   * Other: Jeff Nugent at the WRC had delivered the iPad this morning and did some training on it. Also delivered today from the Regional Commissions was the Timesheet Program for the Highway crew, which not only received info on time worked, but details on that work which can be used for records, grant reimbursement, damage repairs for FEMA accounting for Act 64 for work, etc. Clerk/Treasurer - There was no business to transact.
   * Work Schedule – clean up from winter and indoor work when raining, which is expected most of the week.
5. Clerk had no business to report.
6. Committee Reports:

* Cemetery committee: review and approve Sexton job description and appoint Austin Powers for a 3-year term. Kim Record stated that she had talked with Austin Powers who is ready to go, and enthused. He and Kim had talked about how they would share the work and who was responsible for what items. There is a draft of the Sexton’s job description. In that draft the paragraph referring to overseeing the work in the cemetery by groundskeeping crew should be removed. The Cemetery Committee will have that duty. Cathy Siano-Goodwin had questions about liability insurance coverage for what he was doing, and should injury occur to patrons, visitors etc., The clerk explained that our liability policy covered that. Cathy then moved to appoint Austin Powers Grafton Cemetery Sexton and to adopt the Sexton Job Description as edited to remove overseeing of grounds crew, second Suzanne Welch. Motion passed unanimously.
* Highway committee: John Gregory stated they had three items
  + Walker Bridge. Letters of offer for ROW needed for the bridge went out to 4 landowners with a total amount of $14,000. He had no break down, and we will not know the final amount until the negotiations with each landowner is known. The VTrans original budget was $40,000.
  + Middletown Road – Issue brought by Sam Battaglino and Liisa Kissel. Sam Battaglino commenced the presentation with praise for the Danny Taylor and the Grafton road crew for their work during the latest bout with mud season. He then continued. The basic issue presented was this: some traffic, large, long trucks, should not use Middletown Road at any time, and secondly, when mud season road issues make Middletown Road a quagmire drivers should be warned. They start up a paved road and then discover it is not paved and then get stuck in the mud. Solution: might not a sign, permanent or temporary posted at both ends of Middletown Road warning drivers of the perils prevent what occurred in mud season, and to the long truck a year or so ago. A good discussion ensued concerning the perils of mud season. Many people participated: Liisa and Sam, Russell Record John Gregory, Danny Taylor, and Rich Thompson. Opinions on how effective signs were, how people follow GPS or online maps, even when their own eyes should tell them “turn around,” we learn to live with this issue every year, but can we do something to keep drivers safe, and so on. At the end of it all it was decided that our current practice – let the foreman use his judgement about the roads and any warnings that might need to be temporarily posted and provide him with temporary signs needed for this endeavor. Motion by Rich Thompson, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to leave the solution to the highway foreman and provide him with 4 more temporary signs to assist in this task.
  + The third issue: what to do with flooding and erosion at 25 Middletown road, Patrick Cooperman’s property and the NRCS grant to repair the streambank. John gregory suggested Patrick Cooperman address the issue first.

Patrick Cooperman gave a short history of the issue, including

* The recent damage to his streambank wall and the NRCS EWP grant to repair it.
* In 2003 or 2004 there has been concern. Tighe and bond engineers came up with a plan to deal with issues of flooding and erosion on Fire Pond Road, including the dissipator and short rock culvert that dumps into Hinkley Brook (HB) just upstream from his garage/shed. Patricks’ engineers at the time opined that the solut9ion was not good – perhaps good for Fire Pond Rd. but not good for Patrick. It dealt with nothing passed the ends of both HB and Fire Pone Rds. and took all the water from both and put into HB upstream of Patrick’s house, with the culvert coming off the dissipator directing all the water against the wall and streambank of Dorothy Cannon’s house, which is immediately across HB from the outlet of that culvert. Despite the objections of Patrick and his engineer, the Town and Tighe and Bond and the Town proceeded with the T&B plan.
* In the July storms there was damage to his wall and the walls of others in town, including Dorothy’s, but his site was the only one eligible per NRCS guidelines. The NRCS grant is for $11,000 - $8,000 grant, $2,900. match. With the match being $2900 of that sum. John Gregory stated Patrick has asked for help from the town with the cost based on the 2003 – 2004 letters from his engineer and Patrick to the town concerning the poor plan and how it was not going to work and the Town decision to go ahead with the plan anyway.
* When dam age occurred to the streambank in 1996, the town took responsibility and repaired it, according to Patrick.
* Bill Kearns talked about the issue of hydraulics and hydrology in the area and the flow that may have increased due to the Town enlarging the culverts up stream as it replaced them because the larger structures are required by the State of VT. There is no monetary relief for downstream landowners as the flow is increased, and his discussions with VEM concerning this have led nowhere.
* John Gregory asked that the Town assist Patrick by paying the entire match required in the Grant. Richard Thompson questioned doing this based on a precedent for others in town.
* Patrick Cooperman stated that he spent $4000 or so in 1996, $4000 in 2003 and $4000 after Irene in 2011 and is asking for help right now with the narrow issue, these proposed repairs, with the broad issue of a permanent fix being addressed later. Suzanne Welch stated the Highway Committee is now asking that the town help Patrick. We know that it is going to happen again, and we need to look into a permanent fix to stop this from occurring.
* Motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Rich Thompson that the Town pay the homeowners share of the NRCS grant for Patrick Cooperman’s streambank repair ($11,000. +/- grant with match) and the town will investigate a permanent solution of the water runoff problem at Fire Pond, Hinkley Brook, Middletown Roads and Main St. Motion passed unanimously.
* Patrick Cooperman was heartened by the Selectboard’s attitude toward this issue.
* Parks committee: Request form the Park volunteers that the town continue the work to finish the road and parking area. Danny Taylor stated we need to logger, Long View, to finish up and then the Town Hwy crew will do it as the schedule allows. Kim record stated that there is approximately $17,000 in the park fund. The volunteers are seeking an RTP grant for $30,000. to include trails and the erection of a leanto, thus it is hoped all of the $17,000 will not be needed for the parking but can be used for other projects in the park. As to water coming from the park and adding to runoff at Patrick’s, this needs to be looked into as the project ends and the culverts for the drive are all in.
  + Personnel committee: Amendment to Addendum C of Personnel Policy. Discussion/Action the personnel Committee Personnel Committee by Cathy Siano-Goodwin presented its amended Addendum c and asked that it be so amended. Motion Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Suzanne Welch, to adopt the amended Addendum C as presented. Motion passed unanimously. Cathy also asked the Selectboard to note that the committee would do its quarterly reviews of bill Kearns and Danny Taylor and will make a date with Kim Record and Michelle Dolloph to look at comp and overtime data.
  + Buildings committee: Bill kearns went into detail on the progress of the following projects
    - Elevator Preliminary work agreements, status, costs. Work on upping to 200 amps for the building and the bids go out today on the elevator.
    - Heat pumps. No word.
  + Water Wastewater committee. Status of agreement for engineering study. No word.

1. Other Business: School water issue was questioned. The caretaker says the state still has done nothing. School lease issue for ESSER eligibility – School agrees with the Town that the lease is sufficient for school eligibility for ESSER funds for improvements to the school building. Kim Record stated the State is about to render its opinion on redistricting so listen for that news.
2. Public Comment: none
3. Next Regular Meeting – Monday, April 18, 2022 @ 6:00 PM
4. Adjourn. Rich Thompson moved, second John Gregory to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully presented,

William G. Kearns