**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

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

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

**Monday, August 15, 2022, 6 pm**

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

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

Also: Sam Battaglino, Dottie Cannon, Don Dougall, Mike Faulkner, Bill Kearns (Town Administrator), Liisa Kissel, and Wendy Martin.

Present online: Charlie Bonin, Hardy Merrill, Nancy Merrill, FACT TV.

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

2. Adopt Agenda: It was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve minutes of the August 1, 2022 meeting. It was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by John Gregory, to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2022 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Highway Report:

• Other. Interim Road Foreman Mike Faulkner said that Village Park Committee members had spoken with him about the drive going into the park, saying that there was a drop-off on the low side; he’s suggesting ditching material. There is no shoulder, he said; it’s built up a foot and if you want to have two cars passed, something more stable was needed. It was determined that there were differences of opinion from committee members so it will be brought to the Selectboard when consensus is reached.

Faulkner said that the crew had been mowing and replacing a culvert; grading was not extensive because the weather had been so dry. He said Skip Lisle was working with Town Administrator Bill Kearns on the beaver situation cited at a prior meeting. Kearns said Lisle wanted to install a dry hydrant at the location after remedying the beaver issue, which Kearns thinks is a good idea. It’s possible that Rockingham would like to share that cost because it would benefit that town more than Grafton, he said.

• FEMA projects status. Kearns said that all projects and documentation had been submitted and the town was waiting for reimbursement, which would be $270,000 plus $15,000.

5. Clerk/Treasurer Report.

There was no report.

6. Act on Resignation of Town Administrator, effective September 30, 2022. It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to accept the resignation of Town Administrator Bill Kearns, effective September 30, 2022. Motion passed unanimously. Suzanne Welch thanked Bill Kearns for his years of service to the community.

7. Hiring Committee: Status of Employee Search

• Town Administrator: review and approve ad. It was moved by Rich Thompson, seconded by John Gregory, to approve the ad drafted by Bill Kearns and to run it over the next three weeks in the same publications where the highway position advertisement had been submitted, with an application deadline of September 15, 2022.

Cathy Siano-Goodwin said she would like the board to review the job description with serious thought because when a candidate looks at the description, there won’t be many applications. Joe Pollio said the board couldn’t handpick candidates and the most qualified applicant would be offered the position. Siano-Goodwin said that the board needed to look at the duties and responsibilities because there was overlap. Suzanne Welch asked if the board notify present town employees and welcome internal applications as the board did for the highway position. Siano-Goodwin agreed; Welch will send an email to employees. Pollio said he had reached out to former Selectboard member Sue Allen-Picone because she had expressed interest in the position a year ago; he said she and her husband had purchased a house in Pownal. Welch suggested posting the ad at MKT; Kearns said he didn’t think there was room there and noted that the posting is at three places in town, including on the Town Hall bulletin board. Don Dougall suggested mentioning the position to realtors because new people in town want work and something to do.

The Chair called the question. Motion passed unanimously.

• Highway equipment operator/truck driver. Rich Thompson said he was waiting until the 24th and didn’t know if there had been additional applicants. John Gregory said there were a total of three.

8. Committee Reports:

• Cemetery Committee: Joe Pollio said that the abutter to the Houghtonville Cemetery had agreed to the land donation and the property is in the state’s Current Use program. Transferring the land will require a forester to redraw the property on the Current Use map and Pollio didn’t know how complicated this would be, and the transfer paperwork must be submitted correctly. The other abutter to the cemetery property is still thinking about a donation and will let the town know. Pollio said that right now the cemetery is used to get to this abutter’s property and his “real” right-of-way is not passable. If the town cuts off this access, someone will have to reopen it. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked if the town attorney would have to work on this; Bill Kearns said he would ask forester Tim Morton if he’s dealt with this kind of issue before. Pollio said that the transfer won’t happen for another six months to a year and that the subsequent Town Administrator would work on it. Siano-Goodwin said she was referring to the legislation Kearns had sent to the board; Kearns said he wanted to inform the board of the statutes when it came to a donation of land. At the very least, someone will have to do a title search, he said.

• Highway Committee: John Gregory said that the committee had planned to review current ordinances but thought it should wait until the sheriff has gone over them first. Kearns has left a message with the sheriff’s department. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked if VTrans needed to do a study before changes were made; Kearns said that wasn’t necessary, and that a study could be done at particular intersections if the board wished, but it wasn’t required. The timeline will be to obtain sheriff’s input, complete a review by the Highway Committee, and then hold a public hearing.

• Parks Committee: No report.

• Personnel Committee: Cathy Siano-Goodwin said that she had noticed Bill Kearns had on his to-do list to clean up the Personnel Policy and wondered what that meant; Kearns said he wanted to be sure employees had the final version. He suggested keeping the policy in a doc format so it could be edited in the future. Rich Thompson asked if the versions were dated and he was told they were.

• Buildings Committee: Report on Status of Town Hall renovation work for elevator and ADA Project. Bill Kearns said the Division of Fire Safety inspector had visited the Town Hall. Kearns was told that a closet could not be installed in a stairway because flammable materials are often stored in a closet. He said that Kim Record suggested finding a wood cabinet to be placed to the right side of the entry. It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by Suzanne Welch, to redirect the $1,600 from the All Seasons contract to the purchase of a wood cabinet. Motion passed unanimously.

Kearns said the 200-amp project was going ahead the following week and everything had been marked on the lawn. Once that is completed, the electrician will bring the service in and do what needs to be done internally for the conversion. The Division of Fire Safety inspector said he didn’t think the outside ramp met the current ADA standards for width and that a revision would need to be completed when the town has the funds to do it. Also, he noted there was no designated handicapped parking space in front of the building. The parking space needs to be completed now so that the Town Hall upstairs can be used as a meeting space (maximum capacity: 50), but the ramp can wait. Kearns said he had talked to two paving companies and wanted permission from the board to bid the job out immediately. (He may reach out to a third company as well.) The inspector approved the design (Kearns distributed sketches to the board at the meeting for review). Kearns also said that in the future, the back stairs to the second floor would need to be steel and enclosed.

It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to authorize Bill Kearns to bid out the paving project for the handicapped parking spot immediately. Motion passed unanimously.

Siano-Goodwin asked if there would be an additional cost for the design and Kearns said he didn’t know. He said that All Seasons should have provided this in the beginning. In response to a question from Welch, Kearns clarified that the architect should have provided this. Kearns said he had called the Division of Fire Safety one year ago and was told to go ahead with the project (no site visit was mentioned). When Kearns just called, he had been asked why the inspector had not performed a site visit.

• Wastewater-Water Committee: No report.

9. Other Business: There was no Other Business.

10. Public Comment: There was no Public Comment.

11. Executive Session re Town Administrator per 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(B): The consensus was that no Executive Session was needed.

12. Next regular meeting: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 6 pm.

13. Adjourn. It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by Rich Thompson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Martin