

MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING
Grafton Town Hall Upstairs In Person/Live
With accommodation for persons unable to attend in person via interactive Zoom

Monday, May 6, 2024, 6:00 pm

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

Selectboard: Chair Joe Pollio, Vice Chair Cathy Siano-Goodwin, John Gregory, and Steve Sargent

Also: Morgan Wilbur, Dottie Cannon, Suzanne Welch, Anna Keagan, Colby Record, Patrick Cooperman, Joe Neal, Wendy Martin, Liisa Kissel, and Bill Kearns

Present online: Jessica Moseley, Lain Stevens, FactTV, Donna Alexander, and Charles Bonin

1. Call to order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Adopt Agenda: It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Steve Sargent, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve Minutes of the April 15, 2024, meeting: It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2024, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Highway Report: Colby Record reported there was a failed culvert on Route 35 (Chester Road) between Bill Toomey's house and Eastman Road. There was an 18-inch diameter culvert, but Record would like to replace it with a 24-inch diameter culvert with a concrete headwall. Discussion ensued about closing the road entirely for the installation of the culvert. Record stated it was difficult to find certified flaggers and by closing the road, the project could get done faster. Both John Gregory and Joe Pollio recommended against closing the road because there was not an adequate detour. Gregory understood the challenge of obtaining people to direct traffic, but ultimately thought the road should remain open to one-lane traffic. After further discussion, the Selectboard asked Record to keep the road open to traffic during the installation of the culvert.

Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked about a schedule for grading the dirt roads. Record said the biggest challenge was working around bad weather. He said grading a dirt road could be done up to a day before and after it rains. Siano-Goodwin clarified that a schedule would not mean once a month. Record stated he had been trying to grade the roads as much as he could.

Siano-Goodwin asked if the village fire hydrants get drained or opened. Record said that the Town Highway Department cleans them once a year before summer.

Suzanne Welch asked for an update on the repair to the Village Bridge stone abutment. Record estimated the crew would fix the bridge in the coming weeks and hopes for good weather so that the mortar can set appropriately.

Siano-Goodwin said the Selectboard received an email from Skip Lisle with concerns about the beaver pond on Louis Marshall Road. Record said that when he first started on the highway department (fall of 2022), he lowered the pond level because the beaver deceiver was put in too high; therefore, it wasn't working the way it was intended. He said when he lowered the water level, he called Fire Chief Robbie Sprague to make sure the Fire Department did not have any concerns. Sprague told Record that the pond was too shallow to pump out of anyway. Record said that the Highway Department could build beaver deceivers themselves for a minimal cost.

Excess Weight Permits: Cardinal Logistics Management Corporation and TMG Enterprises LLC.

It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to approve the weight permits and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign and issue. Motion passed unanimously.

Village Fire Hydrant: Colby Record stated that there had been a leak coming from a 2.5” hydrant located at the Windham Foundation’s Homestead building. He said those hydrants were no longer in use. The leak was coming up in the middle of the road. On Tuesday, May 7th at 7:00 a.m., Jamie Gregory planned to dig up the line to determine an appropriate repair.

5. Clerk/Treasurer: Morgan Wilbur said that tax payments are due on May 16th.

6. Committee Reports:

Personnel Committee: There was no report.

Wastewater Committee: Joe Pollio stated the committee had received a letter from Jason Batchelder, Commissioner for the Vermont Department of Conservation. The letter stated that the committee had 30 days to respond with a clear plan on how to use the funds within the grant agreement. If the Town did not respond, the grant agreement would terminate, and the funds be distributed to other Towns. Pollio gave a summary by stating if the Village Park site was used, a drinking water study would need to be done. The only other option that had been presented was several cluster systems throughout the village. There was some discussion about how challenging cluster systems would be to implement; easements, test pits, etc. Patrick Cooperman stated how he felt that Tighe & Bond should be held responsible since they must have known about this deadline that came as a surprise to the Town. Pollio said that Tighe & Bond also had no idea. Colby Record expressed how it felt like the Town was getting dragged along on this study even though Tighe & Bond already knew the village was not suitable for a system. Cooperman suggested developing some type of revolving fund from which landowners could borrow money at a low interest to repair a failing system. He said the State of Vermont had this kind of revolving fund and it might be a creative option to explore. Suzanne Welch said that Tighe & Bond had done a conceptual study for the cluster system. She thought it would be beneficial for someone to come walk through the village and see that there isn’t a lot of space to put 20 clusters. A question was raised about looking at potential parcels again that would have adequate space for a system. Pollio said that the landowners were contacted but all refused but it could be beneficial to revisit the discussion. Pollio said the committee would be meeting to brainstorm ideas and ultimately be writing a response letter to Mr. Batchelder.

July 2023 Flood Update: Bill Kearns said that because of Morgan Wilbur’s efforts, all work receiving reimbursement for the VT Federal Highways had been submitted and payment should be in hand soon. Kearns said that in regard to FEMA reimbursement, there had been 2 projects obligated and 3 should be submitted in the following days. Kearns and Wilbur were processing them as fast as possible and were hopeful that the process would continue to move in a positive direction.

7. Professional Audit Request of Interest: Joe Pollio stated that the Professional Auditors that the Town has used in the past, Sullivan, Powers, and Co., P.C., now needed a written letter of interest from the Selectboard. Morgan Wilbur said she had drafted a letter to be sent.

It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to authorize the Town Administrator to send a Request of Interest Letter to Sullivan, Powers, and Co., P.C., to perform a Professional Audit for FY 2023-2024. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Award Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Bid: Morgan Wilbur and Bill Kearns reviewed the bids and recommended Seam Solutions’ proposal for updating the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to accept the bid of \$9,400 from Seam Solutions for updating the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Other Business: There was no Other Business.

10. Public Comment: There was no Public Comment.

11. Next regular meeting: Monday, May 20, 2024, at 6 pm.

12. Adjourn. It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by John Gregory, to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Morgan Wilbur

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