

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

Monday, December 2, 2024, 6:00 pm

Present at the meeting in the Town Hall:

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

Also: Morgan Wilbur, Colby Record, Suzanne Welch, Wendy Martin, Liisa Kissel, and Dottie Cannon

Present online: FactTV, Charlie Bonin, Lain Stevens, and Nancy Merrill

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

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

3. Approve Minutes of the November 18, 2024, meeting: It was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, seconded by Steve Sargent, to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Highway Report: Colby Record said he was asked by the Personnel Committee to present the Selectboard with a list of projects the Highway Crew had completed since the last regular Selectboard meeting. See page 3 for the full list. Cathy Siano-Goodwin asked for an explanation on “fixed water shut off on School Street.” Record said the cap for the water main had been broken. He suspected that water was in between the cap and the pipe, the water froze and caused the cap to break. He said they had several replacement caps available for a short-term fix. In the summer, he plans to do a more permanent repair for the cap. Record also stated that employees and guests from the Grafton Inn had been parking at the Town Hall late in the evening and sometimes overnight, making snow removal very difficult. Morgan Wilbur said she could send them a friendly reminder to not park at the Town Hall and on the street, especially during snowstorms. Record said that Nathaniel Noyes would be attending the Game of Logging training later in the week in Arlington. Siano-Goodwin mentioned to Record that Parker Hill would be closed on Tuesday, December 3rd for GMP’s work on the power lines. Record was aware of the closure.

Open Trailer Bids: Selectboard Clerk, Steve Sargent opened the bids.

- There were 5 bids received: Maurice Auto & Truck (\$31,960), (\$37,525), and (38,968), Connecticut Trailers (\$38,665), and G. Stone Commercial (\$36,662.04)

5. Clerk/Treasurer: There was no report.

6. Committee Reports:

Personnel Committee: Cathy Siano-Goodwin presented 4 proposed amendments to the Personnel Policy.

1. Deals with drug and alcohol use for Commercial Motor Vehicles, as required by VLCT.
2. Use of the town-issued cell phones.
3. Discusses employees’ ability to respond to Fire and Rescue calls while on duty.
4. Discusses health care and employee benefits

There was some discussion about each item. Siano-Goodwin reiterated that the changes were a work in progress and nothing had yet been finalized. John Gregory asked about the frequency of employee evaluations/reviews.

Siano-Goodwin said she wanted to have 2 reviews per year, however Gregory thought the Selectboard voted to have reviews once per year. Morgan Wilbur will research if such a vote took place.

July 2023 Flood Update: Morgan Wilbur said the town had received another payment from FEMA of approximately \$40,000. She stated that all projects, except for the Eastman Road retaining wall, the Hinkley Brook Road culvert replacement project, and administrative costs, had been paid to the town at the 75% FEMA share. Wilbur explained that FEMA increased its share to 90%, so the town should expect more funds from FEMA as well as the State of Vermont's share. Wilbur and John Gregory explained they had been working with Stevens & Associates for the engineering of the Eastman Road retaining wall. Stevens & Associates presented a proposal, which expired at the end of November. Wilbur said she signed the proposal but was looking for final approval from the Selectboard.

It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Anna Keegan, to accept the Stevens & Associates, P.C. proposal in the amount of \$56,800 for Civil Engineering Design & Environmental Permitting Services for the Eastman Road Retaining Wall project Motion passed unanimously.

7. Capital Budget Hearing Date: Morgan Wilbur explained that she corresponded with a VLCT Staff Attorney to get guidance on publishing the Capital Budget Public Hearing date. The attorney stated that the notice had to be published 15 days prior to the date of the meeting. Since a Selectboard meeting would not be held in time for publishing, Wilbur posted the notice for the hearing to take place at 5:45 p.m. on December 16th.

It was moved by John Gregory, seconded by Steve Sargent to approve the Capital Budget Public Hearing for December 16, 2024, at 5:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Other Business: John Gregory asked for an update on the status of the Houghtonville Cemetery expansion. Morgan Wilbur said that Joe DiBernardo had sent the property owners the updated map and would also put flags on the ground showing the change. Wilbur had not heard from anyone yet but will look into it.

Gregory suggested the Selectboard start thinking of plans for the new cemetery on Chester Road. He recommended widening the road and putting up a gate. After some discussion, Colby Record said he could work on it in the winter when the ground is frozen.

Gregory also suggested the Selectboard, in future budgets, put money aside for repairs on the fire hydrants. He said there is some money available now, but if something happens it won't be enough to cover much.

Gregory encouraged each Selectboard member to meet with Kim Record to understand exactly why the general [Selectboard's itemized] budget has increased from last fiscal year. There was some discussion about why the budget had increased. Wendy Martin asked for an explanation of how hiring a fourth highway crew member was savings the Town money.

Gregory felt there was enough information available to vote on the Walker Bridge bond schedules. Suzanne Welch asked if the schedules were public record. Wendy Martin said that the matter didn't appear on this meeting's agenda. After some discussion, Joe Pollio said they could vote at the next meeting. Gregory said he thought there was no reason to wait to vote.

9. Public Comment: Dottie Cannon complimented and thanked the Highway Department for plowing on Thanksgiving Day.

Colby Record mentioned renting a man lift to cut some tree limbs that are too high to reach from the ground. He said there is money in the budget for this. The Selectboard agreed that was a good idea.

10. Next regular meeting: Monday, December 16, 2024, at 6 pm.

11. Adjourn. It was moved by Steve Sargent, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Morgan Wilbur
Morgan Wilbur

Highway Report (from agenda item #4). Emailed from Colby Record to Morgan Wilbur on 12/2 at 1:49 p.m.

- Patched potholes on Route 121, 35, Townshend Road
- Cut trees/brush on Middletown Road
- Cut trees on Cambridgeport Road
- Cut brush on Hinkley Brook Road
- Prepped all of the trucks for plowing
- Ordered letting for Truck #1
- Put new plow blades on Truck #3
- Graded Fisher Hill, Parker Hill Road, and Ledge Road
- Plowing snow on November 28th and sanded on November 29th
- Fixed water shut-off on School Street
- Organized storage shed
- Oil changed on Truck #2, grader and backhoe
- Winged snow back on pick up route