

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 18, 2022, 6:00 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common and Zoom

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Christopher Martin, and Michele Gonzales; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Library Director Susan Green; Energy Committee member Nick Seifert; Visitors: Lucy Blue, John Morris, Justin Campbell and Chris Bellamy

At 6:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Martin

Changes or additions to the agenda: Clarification of new zoning fee

Minutes: The Board approved the minutes of January 4 and January 11, 2022

Public Comment: Lucy Blue asked the Selectboard to enact a mask mandate for the Town of Marshfield as Plainfield has done. Susan Green is in favor of it. Rich feels that the Board should encourage mask wearing, but he feels that the Board should not enact a rule that they cannot enforce, because the Town could be taken to court and made to enforce it. Lucy explained that it takes the onus off the business, because they can point to the ordinance. Bobbi stated that Maplefields has called to ask whether there is a mask mandate, and stated that their signage would reflect the town's rule. Lucy indicated that they now have a sign up that says masks are not required but recommended. Rich asked if someone calls us and complains that someone is not wearing a mask, how would we deal with that if we don't have enforcement personnel? Lucy feels that most people are genuinely good and would follow the rules. Rich stressed that not doing a mask mandate does not mean the Board is not in favor of masks – it means they are not willing to make a rule that they can't enforce. Businesses have the right to require masks if they want to, and people can boycott businesses that don't require masks. The Board reiterated that they support masks and require masks in the Old Schoolhouse Common, but they are not willing to make a rule that they can't enforce. They feel that the people who believe in the good that the masks do, will continue to wear them.

CV Fiber: John Morris updated the Board on CV Fiber's situation and the understanding of ARPA funds. Any ARPA funds provided by the Town would need to be used in Marshfield, and would help get faster internet to people. It would reduce the amount of money that CV Fiber would have to borrow and would lower the cost of the service that would need to be raised to pay back the loan. He explained that any funds contributed by Marshfield would also be matched by the Vermont Community Broadband Board. He thinks the match would also be spent in Marshfield. The VCBB cap is \$1.5 million. The deadline has been extended from April until the fall. John thinks service in Marshfield will be available in 2023 or 2024. Rich explained that the ARPA guidelines have just recently been issued, and VLCT is recommending that towns wait until we have a better understanding of the rules before committing the funds. He explained that we have some projects under consideration but will consider some funds for CV Fiber when we have a better understanding of what we can spend the money on.

Solar: Nick acknowledged that it is late for getting an article on the warning for Town Meeting. He reviewed three options for a solar project. The Town could install additional panels, perhaps on the roof of the picnic shelter; the town could upgrade the panels on the existing trackers; or the town could become an offtaker with no capital investment but a 20-25 year commitment. He apologized for not bringing it to the Board sooner. The Board decided to hold off on putting it on the town meeting warning, noting that it might be eligible for ARPA funding and if not, it could be put on the ballot in November.

Tax Anticipation Note: Rich moved to execute a note with Union Bank in the amount of \$430,000 at an interest rate of 0.6%, to be invested at 0.75%. Chris seconded – all in favor.

Personnel Policy: The Board revised the personnel policy to add long and short term disability, shortened the COVID leave time, and clarified that the Board could grant benefits to independent officers.

Certificate of Highway Miles: The Board signed the certificate of highway miles, with no changes.

Zoning Fees: Last summer, the Board added a fee for renewing a zoning permit, but it wasn't clear to the Zoning Administrator whether the applicant would need a new permit or what the procedures should be. Rich will look at the statutes and follow up with Bobbi and the Zoning Administrator.

Covered Bridge Property: Nathan Phillips will take care of the hole in the footbridge.

Picnic Pavilion: Nathan Phillips has offered to work on the project. Justin Campbell offered suggestions for construction.

Library Porch: Rich met with Black River Design and the Librarian. The design is going to include a bench around the outside, and an extended overhang for rain, and it will have electrical service for charging phones/laptops. When the design is substantially complete, it will be brought to the Selectboard before it is finalized.

OSC Building Committee: Justin agreed to serve on a committee to recommend improvements to the building.

Liquor Licenses: The Board reviewed and approved applications for new liquor licenses for the potential new owners of the Marshfield Village Store and the Rivers Edge Quik Stop.

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and approved reports for General Expenses and Payroll.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the January 18, 2022 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
