

## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

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Tuesday, May 21, 2024, 5:30 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common and Zoom

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Present: Selectboard members Christopher Whalen, Justin Campbell, and Michele Gonzales; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Eli Toohey (CVRPC); Scott Franks (Building Manager); Visitors Michael Senecal, Wanda Berte, Manny Sainz, and Diana Levine

At 5:32 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Justin Campbell

**Changes or additions to the agenda:** Attorney for buyouts, covered bridge issues  
**Review and approval of minutes:** tabled

**Trail Policy:** The Board discussed the draft trail policy. Some of the concerns were about maintenance and whether a curb cut is required. The Board decided to add the requirement to get a curb cut when accessing property from a legal trail, to help protect the trail from future damage. Bobbi noted that if there is damage to a legal trail, there is no process for reimbursement from FEMA; the Board noted that it would be up to all of the landowners on the trail to pay for the repairs. The Board will ask the Town Attorney whether the Selectboard can approve the installation of power poles on a legal trail.

**Emergency Watershed Protection Program:** Eli Toohey reported that we received two proposals for engineering. Two planners and one senior planner from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) reviewed the proposals and checked references. They recommended hiring New England Consulting Engineers, at a cost of \$42,000. This is within the approved grant budget. They will do the design, bid documents, and construction oversight. There was a second proposal, from Fuss & O'Neill, at a cost of \$130,000. Justin moved to accept the recommendation of CVRPC. Michelle seconded – all in favor. Eli will provide a template for a contract and for landowner agreements.

**Municipal Technical Assistance Program:** Eli explained that even though projects were approved, the funding was not approved. Only projects with an approved statement of work are to continue. This means that only the EWP project will continue because there was no statement of work developed for the other projects. The funding has been pulled back and reallocated for community engagement.

**Old Schoolhouse Common:** Scott Franks suggested that we look at the drainage and maintenance holistically. There are several maintenance issues that will be very expensive to deal with, including rotted clapboards, falling plaster, rotted stairs, etc. He feels that the engineers should be looking at the maintenance issues at the same time that we look at drainage and other issues. He feels that it will be major construction to fix some of the issues. Justin suggested changing the scoping study to include an evaluation of the viability of the building. Scott suggested that the engineer should also look at the foundation of the building, and he suggested putting large maintenance issues on hold until we decide whether we are going to need to do major renovations.

Michelle asked whether there are safety concerns due to the rot and falling plaster.

Scott brought up several tenant issues. He noted that when there are events in the building, there is no supervision or accountability. He noted that after Community Supper, there is food left around and the kitchen is not cleaned, and he found an instapot still on and cooking on Thursday morning. He stated that this is a huge fire risk due to the propane stove. The Board asked Bobbi to notify the Community Supper folks that they will no longer be allowed to use the building unless the kitchen is cleaned after, and children are supervised. Scott noted that it isn't only Community Supper – it is also events held in the building, by the Library and other tenants. He feels that the lack of supervision is a liability for the town, especially when there are kids playing in the elevator shaft. After summer concerts, the trash company will not pick up the recycling because they contain food and trash. Chris summarized the discussion as follows: We need accountability for the great events that we have, so that we are not paying the building manager to clean up after them. The Board will ask the Library Board of Trustees to attend a meeting to discuss the accountability and liability associated with the Library events.

Regarding overdue rent, Kyle Chapin and Four Seasons Landworks has not paid rent for two months. The Board decided that since we have given written notice via email, more than 30 days ago, he will be given until the end of the month to remove his belongings from the space or the belongings will be removed and the space will be rented. Chris moved to amend all leases to require first, last, and security deposit. Justin seconded – all in favor.

Regarding lighting, the Selectboard decided that if the Library wants additional lighting, they will have to pay for it out of Library funds.

**FEMA Update:** Bobbi gave the board an update of the financial status of the flood repairs. To date she has submitted projects for all of the work done so far, in the amount of \$1,868,333. FEMA has obligated \$915,719 and the Town has received \$547,757 in reimbursements. Another \$286,720 is expected soon. The Board asked about the long-term financial impact of the flood. Bobbi noted that the reimbursements will include \$200,000 of the road crew's time and town town equipment usage, but the Town will be responsible for a percentage of the repairs that hasn't been determined yet, and it is difficult to predict how much it will cost to replace the four bridges and we don't know what will need to be done with the Old Schoolhouse Common.

**Cemeteries:** Joe Mangan suggested changing out the board fence in Eaton Cemetery with black chain. He has done this in other cemeteries, the chain is easy to repair, and the wooden fence is more expensive to repair and needs to be painted frequently. Justin moved to accept his recommendation. Chris seconded – all in favor.

**Subdivisions:** A homeowner submitted and paid for a subdivision application, but is withdrawing the application. Michelle moved to refund the application fee, but to decide refunds on a case-by-case basis. Chris seconded. Justin abstained.

**School Revote:** Bobbi discussed the costs for the revote, including postage for absentee ballots,

and additional staff time. Justin moved to bill Twinfield for the revotes, with our apologies. Chris seconded – all in favor.

**Covered Bridge:** The Selectboard received emails from Rich Phillips about the work that is needed at the bridge, and the signs at either end of town. Justin will respond.

**Correspondence:** The Board received a notice of an Act 250 permit for Twinfield’s stormwater improvements, and a letter from Gillespie Fuels warning that the clean heat standard regulation will likely cost an extra 70 cents per gallon.

**Expenses, Permits & Payroll:** Selectboard members read and approved reports for General Expenses and Payroll. They executed a cemetery deed for Norman Kennedy.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the May 21, 2024 Selectboard Meeting.  
A True Record. Attest, \_\_\_\_\_, Town Clerk

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