

## SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

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Tuesday, October 24, 2023 5:30 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common and Zoom

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Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Justin Campbell, and Michele Gonzales; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Marie Olson-Badeau; Steve Fiske (Conservation Commission); Adelaide Dumm (Winooski NRCD); Scott Ciampi; Stacey St. Onge; Artie St. Onge, Arthur Gilman (Village Trustees); Nancy Everhart; Brett Engstrom

At 545 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Baker

**Changes or additions to the agenda:** grants, performance bond

**Review and approval of minutes:** Approved minutes from October 17

**Nasmith Brook Road:** Justin talked to the Army Corps of Engineers today. No other agencies have flagged our permit request for needing additional information so he believes the permit will be granted after the close of comment period tomorrow. It can be released on Thursday. Justin moved to accept the bid from St. Onge, contingent upon receiving the permit from the Army Corps. A performance bond will be required. Equipment will be staged at Twinfield.

**Creamery St:** Marie Olsen-Badeau is concerned because there is still quite a bit of debris in the river behind her home and Tom Maclay's home. Every time it rains, the river goes onto her lawn again. Justin explained that he has brought the representatives from the Emergency Watershed Program to look at the site. He continues to contact them but they are swamped. When they get the letter of agreement done, the Town and landowners will sign it, the work will be done, and the program will pay 75%. The landowners will be responsible for the rest. Any work that is done before the agreements are in place will not be reimbursed. Justin is going to see if there is a way around that requirement due to the delays.

**Truck:** The 2022 town truck is likely totaled. Berlin has a 2015 International truck for \$40,000. Plainfield has a 2006 Mack truck for sale for \$20,000. Tenco in New Hampshire has a Freightliner truck available now for \$290,000. Clarks will have an International truck in December for \$267,500. If we order a truck now, it will cost about the same but will be a standard, and it will be about 18 months to get it. After discussion, the consensus was that it makes sense to buy the \$40,000 truck if the road crew is happy with the condition. Rich moved to approve buying the Berlin truck using ARPA funds if necessary, provided that the road crew is satisfied after they look at the truck. They have a list of work that it needs, and the road crew can do most of the work.

**Jerusalem Road:** Michele has heard from folks that are not happy with the condition of the road. The Board agreed that they have to follow their Class IV policy.

**Culverts:** Adelaide Dumm asked about the status of the temporary bridge on Holt Road over Nasmith Brook. Justin explained that the temporary bridge was installed. We have not sourced

engineering firms yet to design the permanent structure. We have been working on other projects. We hope to start the procurement process soon for an engineer. It is our hope to have one engineer who will design all of the bridges. Steve Fiske stated that the Conservation Commission has concerns about the replacement. The drop in the box culvert prevents exotic rainbow and brown trout from getting upstream, to protect native brook trout above the structure. Adelaide explained that she is looking for information for USFW about funding for the design. They would like to contribute to the design so that it is in compliance with Aquatic Organism Passage standards. She would like to see no drop. Steve stated that the Conservation Commission wants to maintain the drop. He said there is a caveat in the rules that allows us to maintain the drop to protect native brook trout. They are trying to get the stream reclassified as a Class A fishery. They have been talking with the fisheries biologists. They have updated the data and it is still just a brook trout stream. The flood did not do much damage in the upper Nasmith Brook. He stated that lower Nasmith Brook is not in very good shape due to the flood. Adelaide stated that any newly designed structure would need to be in compliance with the standards and they would like to contribute funds to the design. Justin clarified that the town has to procure engineering, and after an engineer is selected, we can be back in touch with her. She encouraged the Conservation Commission to meet with the State River Engineer to discuss the standards. She has approximately \$25,000 to contribute if the town designed the structure the way US Fish and Wildlife wants to see it built, to make it a 1.2 bank-full width structure.

Lye Brook is on Laird Pond Road. There is a perched culvert that did not wash during the flood so the town does not currently have any plans to replace it. Adelaide stated that there is other funding available for Lye Brook. She indicated that the state has money available for this type of project. The Board stated that the town does not have money to do this project but they are supportive if Adelaide wants to research grants for engineering and design.

**Martin Bridge:** Steve Fiske explained that the Friends and some of the Conservation Commission members met at the covered bridge property. The Friends are offering to put in more plants to replace what washed away. They discussed seeding the fields with a better grass than what is there (reed canary grass). The Friends advised the Conservation Commission to seed it with seeds from a wetlands plant company.

Rich Phillips has asked for permission to dispose of trash at the Old Schoolhouse Common. Rich moved to allow a couple bags to be disposed at the OSC, but if there is more, it could be taken to the dump and a bill submitted to FEMA.

**Thompson Road:** Nancy Everhart met with Justin and Scott Ciampi to come up with an estimate to repair damages to the Thompson Road. The repairs could be done in phases. The first phase would be about \$30,000. A rough estimate to bring it up to the level of the railroad bed would be in excess of \$100,000.

Rich has been researching grants. There will be a Recreational Trail Program grant opening soon but Class IV roads are not eligible. There is another grant from the Northern Forest Center that we could apply for. That grant is up to \$25,000.

There is also some flood damage. Bobbi will check with FEMA to see if it is too late to add it to our damage inventory.

Rich moved to authorize the Stranahan Committee to apply for the grant from the Northern Forest Center. Justin seconded – all in favor.

Brett asked whether the parking area on Jake Martin Road is going to be plowed in the winter. The Town trucks can not get in there. The Committee has asked if it could be plowed by a private contractor, and paid out of the Stranahan budget. The Board agreed. The Board also agreed to allow the purchase of a few yards of gravel for the entrance to the parking area.

**Grants:** VOREC is the Vermont Outdoor Recreation grant program. There are grants available for flood damages. Rich suggested that it could be used for the railroad bed. Bobbi asked if it could be used for the Thompson Road. Rich thinks we should apply for a new walking trail at the Old Schoolhouse Common, and better drainage where the Sleeper Road meets the Railroad Bed. The Board approved.

Rich has looked at the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Municipal Highway Stormwater Mitigation Program. It doesn't appear that either of these programs will work for us.

**Municipal Technical Assistance Program:** The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission notified us that we are eligible for this. The Board voted to take part in this program.

**Old Schoolhouse Common:** Bobbi reported that the VLCT insurance claims representative asked us to get estimates for replacing what was there, and submit them, and she will decide what is covered.

**Performance Bond:** The Board received the performance bond from Hogan Excavating.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the October 24, 2023 Selectboard Meeting.  
A True Record. Attest, \_\_\_\_\_, Town Clerk

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