

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

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

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker and Justin Campbell, and Michele Gonzales (at 6:10); Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Library Director Susan Green; Michael Xenakis

At 5:34 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Baker

Changes or additions to the agenda: GMTA, RR Bed, Harris

Review and approval of minutes: tabled

Property Report: Bobbi notified the Board that Scott Franks is still trying to get a heating contractor to service the building. He has contacted many companies but has not found one that has time to work on the system.

Snow Removal: Rich moved to hire Luke Mulligan for snow removal on the sidewalks, at a cost of \$155 each time. Justin seconded – all in favor.

Current Expense Note: Rich moved to execute a current expense note for \$550,000 from Community National Bank at an interest rate of 5.15%. This will be a line of credit. Justin seconded – all in favor. The loan is needed because of the expenses from the July flood. Bobbi received two other bids: 6.55% from Union Bank, and 5.44% from Community Bank (5.34% for a fully disbursed loan).

Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund Eligibility: Rich explained that we are only eligible for 12.5% state reimbursement instead of 17.5% (in addition to the 75% FEMA reimbursement) because our zoning regulations do not include all of the fluvial erosion protections that the state recommends. If a statewide threshold is met, our reimbursement will increase to 90% from FEMA and 5% from the state.

Development Review Board: Henry Harris has asked for a reconsideration of his decision. There will be a hearing in January.

Railroad Bed: A landowner has questioned whether the town actually has a right of way on the railroad bed. The town adopted the railroad bed as a Class IV road in the early 1990's. No one objected at the time. Rich researched the issue with VTrans several years ago and confirmed that it is a town road.

Old Schoolhouse Common Building Committee: Susan has asked if we could resurrect the building committee. Rich feels that we need to decide the purpose of the committee. In the recent past, there was an ad-hoc committee to discuss use of the ARPA funds. Farther back, there was a committee that managed the maintenance and budget, and made recommendations to the Selectboard. The Board noted that Scott Franks is doing a great job as building manager, but there

could be a committee that would make recommendations for renovations of the gym and grounds, etc. Mike Xenakis feels that the committee could be a support for Scott. He volunteered to chair the committee.

Susan feels that we need a clear protocol for who is in charge when there are emergencies. She has not had heat in the library for a few weeks. Scott has brought her a heater as a temporary solution. She would like to contact Bournes because she feels that it is an airlock. Scott has been resistant to contact Bournes because they have not been able to solve the heating issues in the past. Mike knows a few heating contractors. He will pass the list to Scott. Justin noted that Scott is dealing with multiple issues in the building right now, in addition to the heating system. He is dealing with the elevator and electrical work and other issues, and we need to give him the time to work on the building problems. Justin noted that if we can't get a contractor to fix the heat, we may need to close for a short time.

Budget: The Board discussed the library budget. The first proposal was for a 34% increase. Susan suggested providing a stipend in lieu of health insurance, or providing a single plan rather than a family plan, for an increase of 20%. Susan will talk to the Library Board and come back with a lower budget.

The Board reviewed draft budgets for the town departments. The budget has many unknowns due to the flood. Bobbi will work to estimate the amount of reimbursements that the Town will receive next year. The budget will be discussed again at the next meeting and finalized in January.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the December 5, 2023 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
