

Selectboard Meeting Minutes
7/25/2017

Selectboard Members Present: Susan Jefferies, Peter Marsh, Koran Cousino, Keegan Tierney

Others Present: Geoff Green (representing the district Act 250 office), Kerry Kurt, Eric Clifford, Denny Casey, Celine Coon, Town Treasurer, Bill Coon, Dave Wetmore, ZA, Tom Estey, Road Foreman, Jeff Keeney, Thatcher Hurd.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35

The agenda was amended to accommodate Geoff Green's unplanned visit regarding the status of the Act 250 permit on the gravel pit land.

Geoff explained that he was at the meeting at the request of Kerry Kurt. Kerry had taken him on a tour of the gravel pit property and that he feels all conditions of the reclamation plan have been met. Geoff explained that he is happy with what he has seen. It meets the intent of the reclamation plan. He is not concerned with the remaining boulders, stockpiled materials, or lack of topsoil in certain areas. He is withdrawing his request that the town certify the completion of the reclamation on the area of land under the purchase and sale agreement.

Susan Jefferies asked Tom Estey if he wanted anything that was currently on the site for future town use. Tom explained it wouldn't be worth getting anything unless the town was doing the work and that would require rental equipment.

Geoff Green explained that from the act 250 perspective they would hate to see any equipment go back onto the site.

Denny Casey asked if the agreement for the town to do reclamation work was null and void since the site doesn't currently meeting the outlined criteria in the reclamation plan. Geoff Green said the reclamation plan is still in effect and in his opinions the criteria had been met.

Denny asked if the act 250 permit could be amended to state that the land in question meets the reclamation criteria. Geoff said it would need an amendment

Bill Coon asked if the town would be on the hook in the future if a new person came into Geoff Greens role and reviewed the permit. Geoff Green responded that he would provide a certification that phase 2 is complete

Susan Jefferies asked if the town would carry any liability in the future for this area. Geoff repeated that he could provide documentation that the work is complete and that the town has met its requirements. Additionally any future enforcement would fall to the landowner of the property at the time an enforcement action would be required.

Tom Estey - Road Foreman's report

The crew is working on ditching up south. They have worked on stone lining some ditches. The town received a \$12,000 grant for municipal road work. The town also got a grant for mapping and inventory of road sections that are affecting water quality in adjacent surface waterways. Tom reported that he had met at the town garage with Thatcher Hurd about a potential power right-of-way across town property.

Dave Wetmore

Dave Wetmore talked with the board about the selectboard assistant position to learn more about the responsibilities and express his interest in the role.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Small adjustments were made to the minutes of the July 11 selectboard meeting. Peter Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes. Keegan Tierney seconded. All voted in favor

Peter Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 20 special meeting. Keegan Tierney seconded. All voted in favor.

Approval of bills

Peter Marsh had some questions on what bills had been paid to contractors working on town buildings. Celine Coon provided answers. Peter moved to instruct the treasurer to pay the bills. Keegan Tierney seconded. All voted in favor.

Peter Marsh made a motion to instruct the treasurer to pay the payroll and other liability obligations timely in the upcoming fiscal year. Keegan Tierney seconded. All voted in favor

Land Sale

Bill Coon expressed thanks to the board for their work on the issue of the land sale at the town gravel pit/garage. He further reiterated his previously stated concerns that the land sale is subject to numerous obligations and liabilities from parties other than the seller and the purchaser.

Denny Casey agreed with Bill's concerns and expressed his concern about potential legal ramification if the town sold the property.

Susan Jefferies stated that the selectboard will be meeting with the town lawyer to ensure that the town doesn't take on any liabilities through this land sale.

There was further discussion about the history of the land sale, the agreements made, and the town vote.

Denny Casey inquired about the total cost to sell the land and stated that he felt the town vote was contingent on it costing only the act 250 amendment fee.

Susan Jefferies stated that is was not much more than that at this point and that the buyer had agreed to assume up to \$1,000 in attorney fees as part of the purchase and sale agreement.

Denny and Bill and Jeff Keeney would like to see a sum of the total costs to the town. Jeff further inquired whether the planning commission was consulted on the land sale and suggested that in the future it would be wise to consult with the planning commission since they are charged with planning for town lands.

Peter Marsh noted that we should consult with the planning commission about the idea to acquire the fields behind Robinson School which have the solar trackers on them.

There was further discussion around the land sale

Thatcher Hurd - Right of way request

Thatcher Hurd presented maps and information about the potential route of an overhead power line crossing the town property at the gravel pit. He met with Tom Estey and Green Mountain Power to review and they came to a solution acceptable to all parties. The Selectboard agreed that the town had intent to move forward with granting the right-of-way pending receiving legal language regarding the specific locations of the poles to be reviewed by the town lawyer.

Tax Rate

The selectboard and treasurer discussed the valuation of the grand list, the annual budget approved at town meeting and set a tax rate at 0.5568. This number is made up of .5559 to fund the budget items and .0009 to raise the amount given as veteran's exemption.

Maintenance of town buildings

There was discussion of the roof over the vault at the town office, the porch at the town office, and the previously approved maintenance work at the fire station. The painter mentioned to staff at the town office that the landscaping vegetation was touching the buildings in numerous areas and should be cut back. The selectboard agreed that we would ask the mowing company to do this as part of the spring/fall clean-ups.

There was further approval of soliciting bids on replacement of the roof on the vault, repairs to the back porch of the town office, and assessing the electric line between the town office building and the adjacent shed.

Updates on old business

- The committee to discuss the renovations at Jerusalem schoolhouse met again and Keegan and Tony attended. They will give updates at the August 1 meeting.
- The School Property land transfer is in continuing discussion at the school board. The Selectboard will remind them again that we would like to come to resolution on this sooner rather than later.
- Keegan Tierney made a motion to accept a proposal from Community Bank for a loan for 290,000 at 2.27% interest for purchase of the fire tanker approved at town meeting. Peter March seconded all in favor.
- Selectboard assistant position; Susan Jefferies notes that she received a statement of interest from Rebecca Elder in the position. She will be scheduled to attend the Aug. 1 meeting.

Annual Green Mountain stage race

The bicycle stage race that happens in town annually will not be using any town roads this year. The organizer offered to come in and speak with the selectboard as the race will continue to move through town on State roads. The Susan Jefferies let him know that that wouldn't be necessary.

Other Business

Susan Jefferies stated that she had received an anonymous call from someone regarding the ongoing vandalism in and around Brookside Park and that the caller stated that there is intimidation going on in the park targeting a same sex couple. The selectboard unequivocally agrees that intimidation and vandalism is not in the spirit of the citizens of Starksboro and they are saddened by these incidents.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

Minutes submitted by Keegan Tierney, Acting Board Clerk