

SELECTBOARD MEETING
April 9, 2020

Present:	Julia Andrews	John Roberts
	Allison Hope	Nanette Rogers
	Bill Cleary	Greg Barrows
	Callie Hamdy	

Guests: See attached

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was held via Zoom. All attendees attended remotely.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Allison made a motion to approve the March 16, 2020 minutes as written, seconded by Julia Andrews. Bill abstained due to his absence from the meeting. Motion passed: 2-0.

Allison made a motion to approve the March 26, 2020 minutes as amended. Julia seconded. Bill abstained due to his absence from the meeting. Motion passed: 2-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

The Road Foreman, John Roberts, discussed the Road Schedule from March 26, 2020 through April 9, 2020. John is hoping to lift the posting of the roads soon and is down a crew member temporarily due to on crew member being called to duty in the Vermont National Guard. Allison made a motion to approve the Road Schedule as presented. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

ROGERS BROOK CULVERT REPLACEMENT

John had not had a chance to review the bids in full. Most of the companies that made a bid he is familiar with.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Total Bid Amount</u>
Blow & Cote, Inc.	86,220.00
Blue Mountain Trucking & Excavating	110,998.00
Dale E. Percy, Inc.	95,687.50
Desroches Construction Services, Inc.	74,780.00
G & N Excavation, Inc.	69,430.00
G.W. Tratro Construction, Inc.	98,500.00
J. Hutchins, Inc.	68,990.00
N.A. Manosh, Inc.	65,480.00
Ormond Bushey & Sons, Inc.	77,143.00

Nanette advised that she checked each contractor in Sam.gov for status, which is a website to find out if a contractor is suspended or disbarred. Some of the contractors were not in the registration system. Julia would prefer to not make an immediate decision until John has had a chance to review each bid. John agrees that this decision can be pushed to a further meeting since the work will not begin until August. Julia would like to put it on the next meeting agenda.

EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS

The following excess weight permits will be signed by Allison as motioned at last week's meeting: Premier Paving, Rox Asphalt, Northeast Infrastructure, Robert Trucott, Gauthier Trucking, Energy Co-op of Vermont, Kris Bullock, Driscoll Brothers Excavating, Wind River Environmental, Fresh Water Haulers, Dana H. Sweet Trucking and Kennedy Excavation.

LIBRARY STORMWATER WORK

Melissa sent an email on April 3rd to the Library Trustees regarding the Library Stormwater Work. Julia believes this is a multi-faceted issue. There are two parts: who owns the area between the Library and the Town Office (please see agenda item below) and can the Road Crew complete the work. A final design is needed before anything can be done. There was some clarification needed if this issue is the water collection in the Library parking lot or the space between the office and library. John thinks the work is within the scope of what the crew is capable of. However, the Road Crew is still providing clean up and repair from the 2019 Halloween Storm so the Library work may need to be contracted out. Julia wants to keep this project on their list of ongoing items.

OWNERSHIP STATUS OF PROPERTY BETWEEN LIBRARY & TOWN OFFICE

There is a long history of who owns the land between the Library and Town Office. The last time this came up was a couple of years ago, regarding if the town has the ability to block off that egress because the sight distance from that driveway is very limited. If that were done, it would mean the occupants of the house behind the office would need to access their home from the Town Office parking lot.

Nanette thinks its going to take some time to go through the item and she is unsure how the property owner will react to that. John explains that water runs directly down their driveway eroding the land, so the work being done would benefit the homeowner. Bill thinks if the work is mutually beneficial the homeowner won't object. Julia suggests reaching back out to the town attorney to revisit what their opinion on this was before beginning further discussion.

Julia would like Nanette and Allison to locate the information from the last time this was looked in to and to reach out to the town attorney and then the Board will retake up this item when they have more information.

RECREATION COMMITTEE MEMO REGARDING SNOW GROOMER

The Conservation Commission attended a Rec Committee Meeting and wanted to utilize some of the funds in the Rec Committee's Reserve Fund for snow grooming machinery instead of the snow machine. The Reserve Fund has \$7,000. Although they have been able to maintain the snowmobile, the snow making equipment is homemade, which makes it difficult to upkeep and makes it a time-consuming grooming process for trails.

The Conservation Committee put together a quote of their requests which Tonya forwarded on. They requested a flat \$6,000. The Recreation Committee voted to approve it unanimously

on their end, but Tonya knows that those funds are voted on by the community therefore she is bringing the decision to the Selectboard.

The Recreation Committee will put the remaining \$1,000 towards new soccer goals since they are in need of replacement.

Julia wanted clarification on which fund the money was coming from. Tonya clarified this was money that was already budgeted for and is in a reserve fund. Julia also wanted to know if Tonya had a sense if the snowmobile was serviceable for years to come. Tonya confirmed that the machine was easy to maintain for a long time, but the grooming equipment would be very helpful to their cause.

Bill had a question, At that price it is not a motorized groomer, does this drag behind the snowmobile? Tonya clarified that it is an attachment that goes on the back of the snow machine.

Julia personally has no objection to this plan. She feels like the Conservation Commission and Rec Committee are working together to use funds that would benefit each group as much as possible. Bill made a motion to realign the \$7,000 to the purchase of snow grooming equipment and the remainder to purchase two soccer goals. Allison seconded. Allison also wondered where the groomer would be housed. Tonya clarified that Dale Rodgers takes care of the trails; however, the machines and equipment are kept at Pat Haller's property. Motion passed: 3-0.

LIBRARY TRUSTEE RESIGNATION

Allison Hope submitted her resignation from the Library Trustee Board. Julia thanked Allison for her many ways of serving the town. Bill made a motion to accept Allison's resignation. Julia seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

UPDATE ON PIGEON PROPERTY PROJECT

Prior to COVID-19, the Pigeon property was going to have a very tight timeline for the different items going to be discussed for the development use of the property. Since COVID-19, many things have happened: TIFF funding has been tabled, the economic situation of many people has changed dramatically and as a town we don't have a lot of information of how that is going to affect town revenues. There was a decision to put the brakes on the Pigeon property project because the Selectboard is not sure if now was a time when taxpayers were going to be open to the purchase of a property due to strained finances. Julia thinks they need to regroup. She previously met with Seth Jensen. His concern is that he doesn't want the town to completely stop thinking about all the options, but take the time to move slowly and be prepared for when the time comes to receive federal funding for several projects including wastewater.

Allison thinks in regard to the Pigeon property, there were so many opportunities that the project opened up for the Town. Allison talked to Melissa last week and she wanted to revisit the topic of wastewater and make sure that they weren't going to pull back on the prior wastewater fund spending approval that happened prior to the Pigeon property. She hadn't heard that anybody had wanted to pull back funds from the project.

Julia feels like the Planning Commission and their sub-committees have done so much work regarding this project that they can make those decision better than the Board. Bill wonders

without the TIFF funding if they would be asking the taxpayers to foot the whole bill and he doesn't see that happening if that is the case.

It is Julia's understanding that the State might take up non-COVID items during this session, but that it is highly unlikely. Most of their time is taken up with pandemic response issues. The Pigeon property was not tabled by the state because it is a bad project, just that more pressing items occurred.

DRAFT RFP FOR TRASH AND COLLECTION SERVICES

Nanette had marked up the draft based on past conversations. Allison is still finalizing a draft policy for private roads, but that will not prevent the town from putting an RFP out. Myers provided us with the information of the dumpsters around town. Allison wanted to add clarifying language about what would happen if a business needed more dumpsters and what they would pay. She wants to be really clear; she would like them to include what they will charge for a dumpster.

Nanette reminded them that they need to include a paragraph about food residuals due to the new law going into effect July 1, 2020. Allison is concerned that collection of residuals would be a separate truck which would be expensive if these items are collected each week. Julia thinks that this language is difficult to write and difficult to explain to residents.

Allison thinks that the State may require the collection of residuals if we are also picking up regular trash and recycling. In previous years Westford has had a pass of not complying with the pickup of residuals, but now it is required. Basically, if the haulers are coming through they have to provide food residual pick up. Bill wonders if we could pay for it on a resident-resident basis, some people want pick-up others do not. Allison understands however at this time Myers doesn't bill for what they need to bill individuals now let alone later. Myers has stated before that because they are contractually obligated to pick up trash, they don't have a way of actually going after people for what they owe.

Allison clarifies that at some point it will be law for people to compost food. There's not really a way around that, but the easiest way to deal with this is to make composting as accessible and affordable to everybody. She doesn't think it hurts to get a quote for residual pick up.

In Julia's opinion the cleanest way to do this is to stick to the plan to have one quote with and one without. She suspects that since this is quite a new thing the quotes will be quite divergent. Allison asked Nanette if she would include the language in the RFP for weekly composting.

To Bill, this is an unfunded mandate. If the State tells us that we need to provide that, they need to assist monetarily. Allison clarified that residents are now required to compost, but it does not require that that compost be picked up. In some future world it would likely be like if they said they didn't pick up recycling.

OPERATION & MAINTENANCE PLAN – MAPLE SHADE TOWN FOREST

Nanette explains that this needs a vote to accept the plan and to authorize somebody to sign it. Allison volunteered. Julia moved to authorize Allison to sign the plan. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

Allison made a motion to approve the plan. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

COVID-19 UPDATE ON LOGISTIS & STAY AT HOME ORDER

The new measures put in place are working quite well. Nanette explained they are all doing their best to socially distance and continue doing the work that needs to be done. Julia feels that people have adapted well and appreciates Nanette's work on this from the beginning, especially how she has helped continue to improve the situations for employees.

CORRESPONDENCE

Seth Jensen had sent a message to the Selectboard in light of the wastewater/Pigeon property. Seth was present at the meeting and added two things for the record. First, they've known from the beginning with all of the discussions that the projects won't happen if they have to be funded entirely by taxpayers so they need everybody to understand that. The second thing is that there are real liabilities and challenges the Town was facing that led to those discussions and with the additional challenge of COVID, those get pushed down the priority list, but they are not just going away because they do still need to be addressed.

He wanted the Board to be aware that the CARES Act, which is the federal relief bill that was signed, has numerous funding opportunities for municipalities especially brownfields, economic development and housing which were many of the things associated with the project. In order to access those funds, communities will have had to do the planning already so although they are taking a pause to address the challenges of COVID, it is important to keep the planning going. The Town is in a much better place now than 10 years ago, but it's just that it must stay in this good place. In terms of the Pigeon property, Seth suggests shifting from what is the purchase price to what can be done to protect the interests of the Town. For the wastewater, the important piece is the preliminary report that was previously approved. To answer Bill's question from earlier: there is still the 50% funding in the state revolving loan fund which is separate from the rest of the state budget and currently appears to not be impacted unlike the TIFF funding. In no event would they recommend pursuing these items if they had to be 100% funded by town taxpayers. It is really important that we have that foundation so that when the time is right and resources become available we have the potential to be competitive to be securing them because those are our federal tax dollars and it would be nice for some of them to come back to our town. Julia explains that the current situation does not remove the need for wastewater solutions in the Town and she looks forward to working with the Planning Commission to keep taking appropriate steps forward. Bill asked Seth if there was enough footwork done already if one of these opportunities came up if we would be competitive. Seth explained that the brownfields assessments are going to be the critical pieces as well as keeping the property owner in the loop and interested. Finishing Phase 2, which is already funded and underway, would also be important. If we stay steady on the path, we would be competitive; if the Town fully halts items, it would not bode well for things.

COMMUNICATION

There were not any communications.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

Greg gave a brief summary of the FY'21 budget status and highlighted a couple of invoices that are in the warrant. As motioned at the previous meeting, Allison will go to the office to review and sign the warrants.

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ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
March 26, 2020 – April 9, 2020**

Work to be done

- Grade roads.
- Brush cutting on Old Stage Rd.
- Haul in road gravel.

Work completed

- Hauled in road gravel.
- Graded many/ most roads.
- Brush cutting on Huntly Rd.
- Removed a beaver dam on Cambridge Rd.

Approved at the 4/9/20 Selectboard Meeting.

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST**

Date: April 9, 2020

The following people attended the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Tonya Calley (Recreation Coordinator)
Dave Lavallee
Buddy Meilleur (LCATV)
Nathan Lavallee
Lynn Gauthier
Dave Gauthier
Michele Gaboriau
Vicky Ross
Seth Jensen (Planning Commissioner)
Glenn Rogers