

SELECTBOARD MEETING
June 11, 2020

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

Guests: See attached

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 7:01 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

Added Development Review Board minute clerk position to Discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

MINUTES

Allison Hope made a motion to approve the May 28, 2020 minutes as written. Bill Cleary seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

The Road Foreman, John Roberts, reviewed the May 28, 2020 through June 11, 2020 Road Schedule. Allison motioned to approve the Road Schedule. Bill Cleary seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

GOODRICH TRAIL

John Roberts, Road Foreman, attended the site visit for the Goodrich Trail. The first four or five hundred yards was originally very thick. The Conservation Commission along with the Selectboard had authorized Doug Edwards to do 100 yards of clearing. Doug has now opened up what was a brushy trail to 20-30 feet wide, so it now looks like a road. He has cleared the whole trail and put in water bars. He went above and beyond what was asked of him. It looks great for those who want to use vehicles on the Trail, but that is not what the Conservation Commission wants; they want to preserve the historic trail as much as possible.

Allison and several members of the Conservation Commission had been at the original meeting with Doug and were very clear on what he could do. This work was done shortly after that conversation and he was previously talked with. This time he claims to have been confused on what is appropriate, but Allison thinks the Town has been clear. In John's opinion Doug did not do a bad job, but too good of a job making it more accessible to trucks and four wheelers which has left ruts in the trail making it difficult to walk on. The Conservation Commission would like Doug to repair the Trail and Doug has offered John a small fee to do the repairs.

Kirsten Tyler from the Conservation Commission also noted that the property is for sale. Allison would not characterize it as too good a job, because it is not what they were looking for from a trail perspective. John noted that a "no motorized vehicles" sign had been placed on the Repa Road end of the Trail. He had also ordered three more and laid logs across the entrance in a way that vehicles will not be able to enter. Because A. Johnson & Co. has permission to log a landlocked parcel nearby, they feel a boulder or gate would not be feasible

on the Machia Hill side. Blocking off on Doug's side of the property also allows entrance to vehicles.

Bill feels that if Doug makes the fixes mother nature will quickly fill the Trail in with growth and it would eventually become wild again if it were used appropriately. Allison explained that Doug had not taken the original opinions from the Conservation Commission into consideration the first time when he did that work. It leads her to want to say no to the next person to ask to cross town trails and want to open trail for use. She does not think that's a safe prerogative to have with the trails as she does not know this is fixable. Bill suggested a performance bond for all that request motor vehicle use of trails in the future to give them something that would encourage good behavior. Bill asked for Allison's suggestion. She thought that the rut fixes and signage is all that is doable at this point.

Dale Rodgers from the Conservation Commission was present. He explained it is hard to watch a big man cry. Doug feels bad because he messed up and admits it. Damage was done, but if John can get in with his equipment to back drag the biggest problems and fine tune the water bars that would be huge. Unfortunately, it is no longer an ancient trail hike through, it is now a roadway. It is what it is and is still a gift to the Town. It is still a beautiful trail, in his opinion. Doug offered \$1,000 and John would go in and mend the worst parts of the trail; remember it is an ancient trail, not a roadway. The goal is to make it enjoyable for people to get through.

Allison would like a response to the letter and she thinks she'll leave it to John to decide if he has time to do the fixes to the trail, he doesn't need to promise to fix things that are outside his scope of work. Allison thought the letter was clear, but she is on Dale's side where she does not think it matters at this point. She is not impressed because she has had this same exact conversation with Doug in the past.

CSWD FY'21 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Sarah Reeves and Michelle DaVia from Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) were present to discuss the CSWD budget for 2021. CSWD receives their funding through many sources that are not local taxes. With the upcoming food scrap law going into effect July 1st, things are shifting and changing. It is going to require CSWD to be even more vigilant than ever with their budget. Schools and restaurants generate the most food waste in Chittenden County. Lots of people are gardening right now so CSWD is out of topsoil and compost which is not necessarily a bad thing, it means people are using their products. While COVID-19 meant that CSWD had to take some budget cuts, one thing that remains intact is the Community Clean Up Fund which Sarah feels is vital and important. She thinks the budget is realistic and conservative. Allison was pleased with the budget and understands the difficult times everybody is going through. Bill asked for a motion to approve the FY'21 Budget, Allison made a motion to approve the FY'21 budget. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

TOWN WIDE TRASH & RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES BIDS

Kelton from Casella was present. They had reworked their numbers from their last bid. Nanette and he had also gone back and forth to help Casella understand how trash is currently put out in town which helped them come up with new numbers, etc. Their current bid would be \$23.50 a month per household which is about the same service Westford currently receives. They were also asked a question about bulky item pickup. They would do a flat fee of \$550 per dump box that could be set up at the town garage. They also are long time supporters of Green Up Day and would provide a dumpster for that each year. Recently the

sent mailer to all Fairfax residents about the app. Casella sent this mailer digitally to the Westford Selectboard so they could also get this information. The app includes an A-Z list of what items go where as well as scheduling information and push notifications that can be sent out during weather events if certain houses are missed, etc. They feel this only increases their communications with residents. Allison had no questions; she felt the additional information was very helpful. Mike from Casella was also present, they would love to partner with the Town and think it would be a good fit for them. Because CSWDs budget is doing better Kelton does not think there will be any fee increases for the first two years.

Ryan Myers from Myers was present. Ryan reiterated that Myers also has access to the app. They also lowered their bid price since last time. They are allowing two boxes free to the Town per year for bulky drop off. Allison thinks the sticking point for her is that her trash picks up, her road is an easy road. However, there are other roads the Road Crew has deemed passable that Myers has refused to go on over the past couple years and the communication over that has not been great. Myers explained they have purchased a one ton, four wheel drive dump truck and a plow truck. They have also gone back to pick up hauled that get missed.

Allison reiterates that it is not just smaller roads that have had issues for Myers, it is Brookside which is the school road. She imagines the larger truck will go down Brookside. Myers has been resistant to chaining tires and using snow tires in the past, she is wondering how they will change for the next year. Ryan said they have purchased new chains; however, they prefer not to do chain changes for the safety of the driver. Ryan said that they never resist going to a stop. Allison is just making sure that residents get the services that taxpayers are paying for. She also wants to ensure that town employees do not have to talk about trash so often, it takes up a lot of time that could be used elsewhere. Communication upgrades would be wonderful. Prior Selectboard member Grant Thomas had done a lot of work with Myers trying to understand their resistance to using chains.

Bill's thoughts were that Myers is still coming in approximately \$2,000 lower. CSWD was mentioning that tipping fees may not change, those chargers are included with Myers and not with Casella. There is also the bulky item pickup price difference. Bill is also familiar with Myers which he likes. He thinks Myers has been receptive. Bill would prefer to stick with Myers. Allison hears very good things from Fairfax from Casella. Allison would be willing to give Myers another chance, but she wants this topic to take up less time at the administrative, Selectboard and Road Crew level, and if it doesn't, she would be willing to spend more money on trash and recycling to get better service. Bill made a motion to accept Myers bid for the new trash and recycling contract. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

Allison reiterated that when it comes to food scraps, that residents would be responsible for their own composting or disposal. The Board received correspondence from a resident who said they felt that the composting should be left to residents. The cost of whole town pick-up would be too high and in a rural community it is easy to compost.

VERMONT LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

VLCT is putting together a letter for municipalities to be included in funding opportunities with regard to COVID-19 expenses. This means that communities in need of help can ask for assistance. Allison made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

DOG WARDEN RESIGNATION

Dave Tilton submitted his resignation as Dog Warden. Bill made a motion to accept Dave's resignation. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 2-0. They thanked Dave for his service.

DRB MINUTE CLERK RECCOMENDATION

Bill had read Melissa's recommendation for Callie Hamdy to do minutes for the Development Review Board (DRB). Bill is impressed by the quality of the Selectboard minutes and feels she would do a great job with the DRB minutes. Bill made a motion to hire Callie as the DRB Minute Clerk. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

FATE OF SUMMER CONCERT SERIES FOR 2020

The Selectboard needs to make a formal decision on canceling the Summer Concert Series. As a municipality they need to follow the state guidelines which limits gatherings to 25 people or less. If they expect more than 25 people, then they cannot go forward with it. Allison knows Higher Ground has set up drive through concerts, however she doesn't think the Common would work well in this instance. Bill made a motion to cancel the Summer Concert Series with a caveat that if the state guidelines change, we can leave options open towards the end of the summer. Allison says to definitely cancel the June concerts and then going forward based on state guidelines. Allison seconded the motion. Motion passed: 2-0.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR 2021

This was tabled until Julia could be present.

COVID-19 UPDATES & LOGISTICS

The Town Office is open to the public Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday through June. They have been busy, but things are going okay. Everybody in the office is comfortable with how the office has opened.

CORRESPONDENCE

Allison received an email from a gentleman on Woods Hollow who found a litter of kittens and gave him the number to Chittenden County Humane Society. The Selectboard is not equipped to deal with animal rescue.

COMMUNICATION

Nanette will advertise the Dog Warden position. Allison would like the Recreation Committee to communicate to residents the cancelation of 4th of July Celebration.

FY'20 BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'20 budget status report.

APPROVAL TO TRANSFER BUDGETED RESERVE FUNDS

Allison made a motion to approve the transfers noted in a memo to MJ and as budgeted and approved by the voters. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

ANNUAL INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS CHECKLIST

Allison made a motion to accept as amended, Bill 2nd. Motion passed 2-0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

Greg went over the accounts payable warrant.

DISCUSSION OF SETTING TAX RATE DUE TO LATE RELEASE OF EDUCATION TAX RATE

The State has recommended that towns delay setting their tax rate due to the extension of filing Homestead Declarations and the late release of the education tax rates. By State Statute, towns must give at least 30 days from the mailing of tax bills until the first installment. Allison wondered how this would affect the cash flow because many aspects of the budget are reliant on tax payments. Greg thinks it will push us closer to the edge, but feels the Town will be okay, which he is basing on the collection of the May 15 tax installment. Nanette suggested not waiting until August, she would encourage setting it closer to August 1st. This would reduce the time between the August 15 due date and the new one that will be dependent on when the tax bills are issued. This does not need to be decided now.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bill made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. for personnel. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 2-0. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. Allison Hope made a motion to approve employees who are taking emergency paid sick leave or expanded family medical leave under the COVID-19 pandemic, to use the hours intermittently. Bill Cleary seconded. Motion passed: 2-0.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
May 29, 2020 – June 11, 2020**

Work to be done

- Grade roads.
- Replace 3 culverts on Pettingill and 1 on Cambridge Rd.
- Continue with FEMA work.
- Start ditching project on Old Stage Rd.

Work completed

- Graded the North end of Old Stage Rd., North end of Woods Hollow Rd., Cambridge Rd., Rollin Irish Rd., Manley Rd., Maple tree Lane, Phelps Rd., Common Rd., Pettingill Rd., Osgood Hill Rd., Rogers Rd., and Stoney Ridge Rd.
- Ditching on Covey and Old # 11 Rd.
- Tree clean up and washout repair from recent storms.
- Worked on FEMA paper work.

Approved at the 6/11/20 Selectboard Meeting

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST**

Date: June 11, 2020

The following people attended the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Mike Wright
Ryan Myers
Kelton Bogasky
Dave Lavalée
Sarah Reeves
Jennifer Holliday
Michelle DaVia
Michele Morris
Mike Casella
Alex Hayman
Kirsten Tyler
Dale Rodgers