

WOOD CHIPS FOR TOWN COMMON SWING SET

Lori Johnson explained that she began looking into replacing the wood chips under the swing set on the Common. She discovered that the chips must be state certified, . Nanette provided a list of vendors that other Towns have used. Lori received four quotes for the Board to consider; each quote is for forty yards to meet playground requirements.

Lee asked who says the woodchips must be certified and twelve inches deep? Melissa Manka explained that when the old play structure was removed, and the new swing set was installed it had to meet standards for public play structures. The State identifies the type of materials, the size of the area, the depth based on swing heights, etc. All public play structures must meet standards, or it may impact insurance. When the swing set was installed, the pad was created according to standards. The Town used the same woodchips as the school which were trucked in. The lowest quote Lori received was \$1,500.

The cost of the swing set was covered by a calendar fundraiser over several years. Lori hoped the Town could split the cost between town funds and the funds from the Common Reserve Fund. The Board felt that the money set aside for the maintenance of the Common fit this item. They also asked the Common Committee to factor this into reoccurring expense for future years. Bill felt that if Common Use Application had a fee, it would help cover this type of expenses. Lori explained that the Town's attorney recommended not charging a fee because it could make us liable. Bill Cleary made a motion to accept the quote provided by Durgen & Crow for wood chips for the swing set on the Common and to use funds from the Common Reserve Fund to cover the expense, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2:0.

REQUEST TO USE MISTY MEADOW TRAILS BEHIND SCHOOL FOR 5K EVENT

Catie Markesich is requesting permission to use the Misty Meadows Trails on October 30th for a 5k run/walk event. The event would begin at 8am; she would like to start setting up at 5am. Catie plans to mark the trails with small stakes with arrows on paper plates at junctions, neon tape to lay on the ground, and dog photos/posters. Everything set up would be taken down. Registration would happen at a table in the parking lot. She does not expect the event to last past 10am.

Catie is hoping to allow people to run with their dogs and would have a list of dog etiquette that needs to be followed. The proceeds would go towards a dog rescue organization and a small portion would be donated to cover trail maintenance. Bill thought it was well thought out. He asked if she has any idea of a headcount. The cutoff would be 150 people. Extra would be charged for dogs. It was pointed out that the event would not have exclusive use of the trails therefore non-event user encounters could occur. It was also pointed out that allowing dogs to be a part of the event poses a liability, one that Catie will want to consider if she wants to take on. Other things to consider are parking, traffic control, and staggering small groups.

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the request conditional upon Catie working with the Conservation Commission on the details, and that she files proof of insurance before the event, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

APPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VACANCY ON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Board recognized Dale Rodgers resignation from the Conservation Commission. They thank him for his years of service. He is recommending that Chris Cunningham be appointed to fill the vacancy. Dale advised that Chris has been volunteering and already understands

how to undertake trail maintenance even on the more difficult trails. The Conservation Commission received two applications: Chris Cunningham and Kati Anderson. Commissioner Elias Rosenblatt stated that the Commission voted unanimously to recommend Chris. It was noted that there was no interview process. The Board reminded the Conservation Commission of the process to fill a vacancy, which involves interviewing the applicants before making a recommendation. Bill Cleary made a motion to appoint Chris Cunningham to the Conservation Commission as recommended, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0

UPDATE ON PLANNING COMMISSION PROJECTS

Mark Letorney from the Planning Commission was present to give an update on Planning Commissions projects. Mark thanked the Board for their support on the 1705 Vermont Route 128 Project. The project would have allowed the remediation of a brownfield and given space for a new Town Office as well as provide more parking, river access and affordable homes. Unfortunately, the Town was not successful. The Vermont Housing Conservation Board turned down their application mostly due to the non-defined timeline on wastewater and the appraisal. The Pigeon family has decided to put the property up for sale. The Planning Commission still has obligations to finish out on the CCRPC planning grant and intends to make themselves available to whoever purchases the property.

Mark advised that any improvements the Town wants to do with the town office, even in its current location, will require more space and more parking therefore alternatives should be considered. He recommends approaching the Pigeons for a boundary line adjustment.

To meet current state codes the building will likely endure a larger footprint; parking is also an issue. The only area to rectify parking would be to cut up more of the Common. The other alternative would be to move the office outside of the village. Lee heard that if the town office were to be expanded, it would need to be ADA compliant, which would require three phase power. Mark confirmed this. He explained that in order to get three phase power to the town office, new infrastructure would need to be installed from Route 104 up Route 128. This would be costly and would impact property owners, especially the Phillips.

Bill asked if any grant reimbursement was at risk. The CCRPC funds were for assessing the situation and removing one of the tanks. Petroleum cleanup thus far has been covered by the Pigeon's insurance company. The CCRPC funds were for assessment which should have happened regardless. A brief discussion occurred regarding the need for potable water for the town office, library and other properties located around the common.

Individual public wastewater for the office was explored in 2006. A system would have to be above ground, would limit the number of employees to less than we have now, and take up most of the parking lot. It was then that the Town began looking at other properties for wastewater such as the impending wastewater project on the Jackson Property.

Mark feels it is time for the Selectboard to advocate for the Community Wastewater System. The Jackson Farm has ideal soils for a conventional system and with a drip dispersal system we will deliver one of the most efficient wastewater systems. Any smaller system would be five times higher in user cost due to the ledge blasting that would have to occur. The firms we have worked with are saying we have struck gold and the Town has already secured most of the funding for the Community Wastewater System. In Mark's opinion the Board needs to come out and say we need this due to what is happening below surface at our town common.

The Planning Commission would like to bring this to bond vote in 2023. He does not think March is likely, but later in the year. Melissa explained that, as the Board is aware, they were working with Green Mountain Engineering (GME) but are now working with Stone Environmental. Stone and Birchline were working as subcontractors under GME. Birchline has been continuing to help us with design and public outreach but has not been paid so the Planning Commission would like to bring them forward as an actual contractor not a subcontractor. There was an increase in engineering costs. The Planning Commission is proposing that the cap remain at \$125,000. There are still funds available, about \$45,000 that can be spent under the cap. They will be asking the Clean Water State Revolving fund to provide another grant that would get them to the increased costs. If the Town decides to sign the contract for the state ARPA money that will also give the project funds to complete Step 2 or and if local ARPA funds are dedicated to the project that is also an option.

Sheila Franz was present. She understands that Mark is talking about sustainability in the areas that are served by wastewater but feels they are enabling the potential for too much growth to happen. For her it is not just about sustainability.

Melissa noted that Westford is a bit different than other towns working on similar wastewater projects. The other towns do not have the land or the designs. We do not believe in going to bond vote without the costs, land, designs, etc. That is why we need to get the funds to do the Step 2 and get that data so that residents have full information of what the system will look like, the components, costs, impacts, etc. as well as residents fully educated on those details. Where some towns do bond votes very early, she wants everybody to have the full information. There is an expense to it.

Barb Peck was present. She disagrees with Mark that the Selectboard should take a position on the issue in the light of the fact that there is a chance that the bond could be voted down. She feels there is a strong contingency that does not want to see the wastewater system go through. She feels this will get more political and heated as time goes on and feels the Selectboard should stay above it.

Louise Jensen was present. She said there are also people in this town that believe the wastewater issue is very important and this will never turn into Essex Junction, we do not have the space or the land for that type of growth.

Bill was curious about legally pursuing compensation from GME over the dissolved contract and the costs associated but they are a dissolved company. Melissa is not sure how that works. It may be very costly.

Bill Cleary made a motion to make an exception to the Town's Purchasing Policy for professional services for allowing Birchline Planning to continue forward with engineering work, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

RECREATION COORDINATOR RESIGNATION AND POSTING ONLINE

Heather Rodriguez submitted her letter of resignation as Recreation Coordinator. The position needs to be advertised. Nanette feels the ad we used earlier in the year is still valid and is ready to post. Bill Cleary made a motion to accept Heather's resignation and to post the opening, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Board received correspondence from Nanette and Melissa regarding the access between the Town Office and the Library. This needs to get resolved as it will impact what can be done if anything at the town office.

Seth Jensen corresponded about the condition of the portalets on the common. Working Dog had been notified.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate Recreation Committee vacancies.

REVIEW GENERAL FUND AND HIGHWAY FY'23 BUDGET STATUS REPORTS

Greg discussed the General Fund and Highway Budget status reports.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board reviewed and signed the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Ben Bornstein
Dave Lavallee
Caroline Brown
Louise Jensen
EJ Blondin (J Hutchins)
Elias Rosenblatt
Melissa Manka
Kirsten Tyler
Sheila Franz
Barb Peck
Catie Markesich
Mark Letorney
Lori Johnson
Dale Rogers
Kati Anderson
Chris Cunningham
Ira Allen

TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
August 12, 2022 – August 25, 2022

Work to be done

- Grade roads when weather permits
- Continue adding gravel on several roads
- Replace a few culverts in various locations
- Continue hauling winter sand

Work completed

- Graded Huntley Road, Woods Hollow Road, Rollin Irish Road, and north end of Old Stage Road
- Graded and repaired many sections of road due to heavy rain
- Added gravel to a section of Old Stage Road, Woods Hollow Road, and Osgood Hill Road
- Hauled in winter sand
- Torrey and Reggie participated in grader training with Stu Johnson from Vermont Local Roads

Approved at the 8/25/22 Selectboard Meeting.