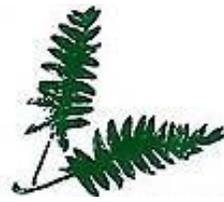


Town of Dorset, Vermont



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=====*Chartered 1761*=====

Dorset Selectboard Meeting Minutes December 21, 2023 At 7pm Dorset Town Offices

Members Present: Megan Thorn, Henry Chandler, Frank Parent, Liz Ruffa
Members Absent: Jim Salsgiver

Others Present: Rob Gaiotti (Town Manager), Kate LeVine (GNAT), Tammie Reilly (GNAT), Kate Bryant (GNAT), Sandy Pinsonault (Town Clerk), Gay Squire, Tyler Yandow (Zoning Administrator).

Megan Thorn called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

November Minutes:

Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve the November meeting minutes as presented, motion passed 4-0.

Public Comment:

None

Bylaw Map Amendment Public Hearing:

Megan Thorn opened the Bylaw Map Amendment public hearing. Rob Gaiotti presented that the map edits were noticed by property owners after the August adoption of the new zoning bylaw. In summary there were 12 properties that were impacted by the prohibition against building at 1,600' elevation and above in the Rural Resource Protection Zone. There are 7 of these properties that already have water/waste water and subdivision permits in hand but no homes have been built. As a result the Town has edited the maps, moving the building prohibition to the 1,800' elevation to allow homes to be built on these pre-existing lots. Megan Thorn noted that the Planning Commission had approved this change and now it was before the Selectboard. No additional public input was received. Frank Parent moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the bylaw map amendments as presented, motion passed 4-0.

GNAT TV Funding Update:

Tammie Reilly was present from GNAT TV to review a prepared memo that illustrates the services that GNAT provides to Dorset above and beyond the filming of municipal meetings. She noted that GNAT hoped to expand these services over time and was hoping to move the appropriation into the Town budget as part of that process. Discussion ensued about metrics to measure the impact of GNAT and reach within the community. Further discussion ensued about

hybrid meetings, how many meetings GNAT is able to cover in a given year etc. Rob Gaiotti noted that the East Dorset Cemetery Association had recently been added to the Town Budget vs. voted because the group of volunteers doesn't have capacity to petition. Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to move the appropriation for GNAT TV into the budgeted appropriations within the Town Budget, motion passed 4-0.

Liquor License Approval:

Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to convene as the Dorset Board of Liquor Control, motion passed 4-0. Sandy Pinsonault stated that HN Williams and HITS INC had licenses ready for approval:

- HN Williams - 2nd class
- HITS INC - OCP, 1st class, 3rd class

Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve the Liquor Licenses as presented, motion passed 4-0.

Housing Committee Update:

Liz Ruffa gave a brief overview of the first 2 meetings of the housing committee so far. In the December 13th meeting the group met with multiple regional entities that work to provide housing in different manners. She noted that the committee members are all very engaged and are really starting to hit a stride. They will be meeting with Cat Bryars from Shires Housing in January to dive into possible options for Raptor Lane. The group has also created 4 major topic of work: Raptor Lane, Updating of Regulations (STRs etc.), Upgrading of Infrastructure, and the development of a Housing Trust. Next Meeting is January 13th. Gay Squire asked about the status of the Short-Term Rental regulation. Henry Chandler noted that the Board is reviewing what is going on in other communities and feels that an ordinance with some kind of registry will likely be the first step. Rob Gaiotti is to place STRs on the agenda for January and present information to the Board.

FY2025 Draft Municipal Budget:

Rob Gaiotti presented the first draft of the FY25 Town Budget. The biggest item of note is that the actual bond payment for the Town Offices will be included in the next budget. This alone represents a 4.9% expense increase from year to year. Overall the draft budget is around an 8% increase with heavy increases in fixed costs. Discussion ensued about the overall budget and working to lowering the increase from year to year. Megan Thorn noted that if the Town did not pursue paving of Kirby Hollow that could help to ease the funding needed for the pavement sinking fund, this would help to lower the figures. It was consensus of the Board to not include a plan to pave Kirby Hollow in the FY25 budget. The Board also approve the inclusion of a \$300 appropriation for Neighborworks be added to the budgeted appropriations. Henry Chandler noted that the Town is anticipating that VNA will lower their request by \$10,000 for FY25 as well. Frank Parent moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the budget with those edits for public hearing in January, motion passed 4-0.

Old Business 12-19-23

New Town Office (No Change)

Had a design meeting with Maclay in early October. They have met with Naylor & Breen who will prepare yet another updated cost estimate in November that will help us set the stage for bidding in January-March to start work spring/summer 2024.

Permitting will take place in April-June; Design April-August; Bidding/Pricing Sept-Dec; Site Work possibly by winter 2023 with building starting in spring of 2024.

Read Farm Lane (No Change)

We await the final decision from FEMA related to the increased costs of the buyout. The State has told us to get a closing attorney on board, and that they would expect a decision by the end of the year.

Broadband:

Dorset is fully built out with fidium and many places now have 2 internet options. Comcast appears to be possibly extending service to new areas to compete as well.

Legal Trail 6 (no change)

Tread Lightly! Has documented lots of ATV use on the legal trail, some users have been covering up the cameras and cutting trees to access the road on their ATVs.

Route 30 Village Concerns:

We will be removing the Village speed signs soon for winter weather. FYI – we need to apply for right of way permits with the State when we put them back out next spring.

Little Mad Tom/ Tennis Way:

Continued work to coordinate with permitting agencies and property owners on Tennis Way to make the berm repair on the river.

Upper Hollow Lot:

Test Pits were positive, next steps could be seeking Town and State permits in order to list for sale.

December 19, 2023 Finance Report:

Delinquent Taxes:

\$106,334 as of 11/17/23, last year \$123,394

FY24:

We are 49% expended at the 48% mark in the fiscal year. Still early in the expense side of the year. Monthly expense like payroll, insurance, utilities. Early winter has been mild, little material and overtime costs yet.

Coolidge Lane payments have been trickling in.

Sinking Fund Balances:

ARPA: \$436,500

Reappraisal: \$195,044

Equipment: \$195,044

Highway Paving: \$203,388

Unemployment: \$50,882

Land Records: \$30,533

Town Buildings: \$11,383

Highway Bridges: \$10,141

Debt: Equipment Loan: \$0 2021 Town Office Bond: \$3,600,000 (bond rate: 4.01%)

Assets: 10 acres Upper Hollow Road / 308 acres Raptor Lane

Town Manager's Report 12-19-23:

Highway:

- Planning some tree work
- Winter Road treatment total so far: 8 (this covers anytime we plow or put down salt/stone on roads). Typically around 30-40 events in a winter.
- Equipment maintenance

Misc.:

- DFD is applying for construction permit to possibly add 500-750k in additional work to the current project. This will allow them to maximize grants.
- PACIF meetings/ Online Act 250 report meeting
- Housing Committee Meetings – group is making good progress. Next meeting is January 10th.
- FY25 Budget work, rounding up plans for the next year.
- Planning continues for the Route 30 pathway, final draft is out for comments from VTrans. We anticipate a presentation to the Board in late January or February.
- FEMA reimbursement work continues for the July storm. Total damages are

around \$30,000.

- Pre-construction meeting for the rail bridge. We have been working with the owner of Safe Place to remove beaver dams that were built after the EWP work.
- Working with Tennis Way owners to help permit the stream channel work to prevent further flooding of the park.

Test pits at Upper Hollow Road will allow for a mound system. Do we want to pursue full water/wastewater and building permits? In order to market the property for sale to abutters

Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:23pm, motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Gaiotti', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rob Gaiotti
Town Manager