

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2023

7pm

Dorset Town Offices

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

Others Present: Rob Gaiotti (Town Manager), Kate Levigne (GNAT)

Megan Thorn called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

March Meeting Minutes:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the March meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

ZBA Resolution:

Henry Chandler moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve the Zoning Board of Adjustment Resolution, lowering the number of board seats from nine to seven. Motion passed 4-0.

Board Appointments:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Henry Chandler seconded to appoint Liz Ruffa as a Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) Representative, motion passed 4-0.

Henry Chandler moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to re-appoint the following board seats:

Planning Commission (4-year terms ending in 2027):

- Gay Squire
- Kit Wallace
- Scott Thompson

Zoning Board of Adjustment (3-year terms ending in 2026):

- Kevin O’Toole
- Ruth Stewart

Conservation Commission (4 year term ending in 2027):

- Lee Romano

Design Review Board (3 year terms ending in 2026):

- Kit Wallace
- Arnie Gottlieb
- Lindy Bowden

Motion passed 4-0.

Emergency Medical Services Agreement with Northshire Rescue:

Henry Chandler moved and Frank parent seconded to approve the 3-year EMSA contract with NRS. Motion passed 4-0 (Jim Salsgiver abstained).

Solid Waste Implementation Plan Amendment – Hazardous Waste Facility Addition:

Frank Parent moved and Liz Ruffa seconded to approve the amendment to the SWIP to include the addition of the permanent HHW facility as presented in the amendment language. Motion passed 4-0.

Old Business:

New Town Office:

Town now has signed agreement with Maclay, they are working through the design process.

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.

East Dorset Village (No Change):

Still waiting to hear from the State on green space.

Read Farm Lane

Happy to say that we have received all permits and easements necessary for the instream work. Now we coordinate with Daniels Construction for the work to take place (this summer).

We have also received the FEMA grant agreement for buyout of the Chantecleer, grant total is \$595,000 (which includes funding to demolish building). The real estate appraisal has been updated and we now await the business valuation review. Once we receive this we will approach the State of VT Flood resiliency fund to get additional funding to hopefully reach a price the Baumman's can sell for.

Broadband (No Change):

Our CUD has received their \$9million grant and will continue to move forward with Consolidated to have fiber to every home in Dorset by the end of 2023.

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.

Coolidge Lane:

We held a meeting with interested parties in early April. Town is now working on cost figures for a "simple" improvement approach with fabric and stone. Costs will then be run by interested parties to see how feasible it might be for funding. It is likely that the Town may be asked to spend funds on materials.

Route 30 Village Concerns:

1st of 2 speed signs is up in Dorset Village. Cpl. Thomas continues to do a nice job with directed patrols. We are getting ready for spring/summer.

Draft Zoning Bylaw & Town Plan – Set Public Hearing Date:

Frank Parent inquired about whether minor edits could be done to the document after the public hearing. Rob Gaiotti replied that if the changes are not substantive, they could be made at the meeting, changes with substance would require the PC to review. Frank Parent noted that in the Stormwater section the Town was adding in a standard that would be more aggressive than the State of Vermont and would require the Town to hire staff to manage and enforce. He suggested removing a paragraph and changing the threshold. Rob Gaiotti will consult with Attorney Barlow to see if that change would be substantive. Additional discussion ensued about the RRP zone and other impacts to property owners as part of the changes. It was noted that new materials should be updated on the websites. Liz Ruffa moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve May 16th at 7pm for the ZBL and Town Plan Public Hearings. Motion passed 4-0.

Finance Report:

April 24, 2023 Finance Report:

Delinquent Taxes:

\$261,621 as of 4/21/23, last year \$268,956

FY23:

Roughly 80% through the year and sit at 80% expended. Monthly expense: personnel, utilities, winter highway, non-profit appropriations.

Received the 3rd of 4 ARPA payments

Sinking Fund Balances:

ARPA: \$291,020	Reappraisal: \$180,376
Equipment: \$40,830	Highway Paving: -\$26,054*
Unemployment: \$50,882	Land Records: \$28,545
Town Buildings: \$11,383	Highway Bridges: \$10,141

Debt:

Equipment Loan: \$26,190 2021 Town Office Bond: \$0 of \$3,600,000 (current bond rate around: 3.97%)

Assets:

10 acres Lower Hollow Road / 308 acres Raptor Lane

*Deficit in the paving fund is due to 2022 project pricing for Paul's Way & Danby Mtn. This is resolved with the FY24 paving budget line item.

Henry Chandler moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to approve the finance report. Motion passed 4-0.

Manager's Report:

Highway:

- Grading/ graveling of roads
- Tree work
- 2023 project planning/ grant submission

Misc.:

- Happy to report that DFD received the ACCD grant of \$1 million for the water project. This brings grant funding up to \$3.25 million of the \$5 million project!
- PACIF Board Meetings x 2
- Submitted a grant application for a new retaining wall on Mad Tom Road – to replace an older wooden wall.
- Met with owners on Coolidge Lane with regard to possible partnerships etc.
- Planning meeting with Dubois & King related to Route 30 Pathway Scoping. We are structuring the study in such a way that it gives a recommended option based on costs and design inputs. It will also show full costs of all options, so residents can better understand the project.
- Grandlist getting put together for next year, assessing year ended 3/31.
- The Vermont Tax Dept. is changing the manner in which education property tax bills will be produced and homestead declarations are sent to the town database. This could cause some delays and a learning curve when new bills come out this summer.
- Continued work with FEMA and NRCS for Read Farm Lane; coordinated appraisal firms for Chantecleer buyout process.
- Planning Commission has approved the Bylaw and Town Plan. They are now actionable for the Selectboard.
- We installed the first of 2 speed signs on Route 30, feedback positive so far about speeds lowering.

Payroll & AP:

It was the consensus of the Board to sign the weekly warrants for payroll and AP

Other Business: Liquor Licenses

Jim Salsgiver moved and Liz Ruffa seconded to recess the SB meeting and convene as the Dorset Liquor Control Board. Motion passed 4-0.

Frank Parent moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve 2023 Liquor Licenses for:

- Dorset Union Store
- Mettawee Mint
- Has Gas
- Dorset Theatre Festival

Motion passed 4-0.

Other Business: Legislation

Megan Thorn noted that there were multiple pieces of legislation that could have broad economic impacts on residents and voiced concerns about those impacts. Discussion ensued about the legislation and getting in touch with the Bennington County delegation to express those concerns as voters.

Henry Chandler moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:38pm. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted

Rob Gaiotti

Town Manager