

Town of Dorset, Vermont



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

Meeting Minutes Dorset Selectboard July 18, 2023

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

Others Present: Kate Levine (GNAT), Rob Gaiotti (Town Manager), Gay Squire, David McAneny, Kyle Lawrence, Alec Petry, Jamie Penge, Zach Dilworth, Brandy Saxton, Scott Thompson, Ruth Stewart

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

Megan Thorn noted the need to rearrange the agenda to discuss flooding issues and concerns from the July 10th storm.

Approve Minutes:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the June 15th meeting minutes, motion passed 3-0.

Public Comment:

Flooding Concerns/Brookside Drive:

Kyle Lawrence was present to discuss concerns with continued flooding and restriction of access on Brookside Drive. He noted that capacity needs to be restored to the river to allow the floodwaters to move through the area more quickly. He has lived on Brookside Drive for 3 years and the issue has become worse each year. This most recent storm the water overtopped Brookside Drive. Zach Dilworth noted that Brookside Drive is under water almost once a month, and each time it causes around \$1,000 in damage just to make the road traversable again. He noted that the new culverts under Read Farm Lane do help greatly, but he still has concerns with the frequency of flooding. Alec Petry stated that he has lost a lot of property behind his house to the river and he and his family need help to figure out a solution. Discussion ensued about what items have been done over the years. Rob Gaiotti noted that the current debris removal project was stalled because of the need to cut "bat trees" which takes additional review time. The work should take place in late April.

Discussion ensued about removing sediment from the river channel and whether the Town could assist residents with this effort. Rob Gaiotti will contact Josh Carvajal about getting permits and reviewing options. Rob Gaiotti noted that after the debris removal work, the Town was hoping to get a permit to re-establish a flood chute just beyond the rail road bridge. Jamie Penge noted that nothing was being

done and he heard of a meeting in Manchester with Josh where work was being done and things were being taken care of. Rob Gaiotti noted that if the buyout goes through at a higher figure the Town will have helped to bring over \$1.5 million in resources to help address this issue. He also noted that the replacement cost of rail bridge 76 is over \$3 million. Further discussion ensued about cleaning out the river upstream of the bridges and in between the bridges.

Town Office Bond Document Approval:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve the prepared bond documents for closing in early August, motion passed 3-0.

Bylaw Discussion (Continued):

Megan Thorn noted that the Board would continue the discussion of the bylaw. Henry Chandler noted the following requested change: in the Rural Resource Protection zone the building envelope should be subject to no construction above 1,600' elevation. Brandy Saxton noted that she can review how many properties might be impacted by these changes and report back at the August meeting.

It was also noted that the Board would like to include the changes to the stormwater rule to make sure the Town isn't regulating stormwater beyond what the State already regulates. It was the consensus of the Board to make this change.

Lot size in the Rural Residential zone: Discussion ensued about the increase to 3 acres in the RR zone. It was the consensus of the Board to lower the minimum acreage in the RR zone back to 2.75 acres as was previously listed in the bylaw.

Brandy Saxton noted that she will present an edited document at the next meeting that will also include the State HOMES Act language that is now required to be included. Henry Chandler expressed gratitude to the Planning Commission and planning consultants Brandy and Rod for all their work over the past 3 years building the new bylaw.

The Board will review the edited bylaw at the August 22nd Meeting.

Bond Anticipation Note:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Frank Parent seconded to approve the \$3.6 million Bond Anticipation Note for the new Town Office – note held with Community Bank, motion passed 3-0.

Old Business 7-18-23

New Town Office:

We received permit approval from the Planning Commission on 7/11. We still need stormwater and w/ww permits then can begin the bid packaging process once design is done. Hope to know more soon.

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

EWP project is awaiting approval to cut a few trees, all equipment is present on the site. Andy Tarantino has been very supportive and allowing us to stage and access the river from his property. Hopefully this work will be done within the month.

Northstar Hydro is adjusting the BCA for our FEMA grant to be amended for a higher value. Hopefully this will happen soon so that we can get confirmation from FEMA and the State and draft a purchase and sale agreement with Chantecleer.

Broadband:

Requested a meeting with the Consolidated communications contact, hoping to meet soon.

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:

MOU from attorney Barlow pending.

Route 30 Village Concerns:

VTrans has requested that we remove the speed signs in the Village because they don't meet MUTCD standards. We will work with them to keep things in place.

July 18, 2023 Finance Report:

Delinquent Taxes:

\$205,576 as of 7/14/23, last year \$218,504

FY23:

Close the FY23 year, on the expense side we were 5% over budget, there are some things like marble sidewalks expense that we will have revenue for in FY24. There are other items like Highway Engineering expense where we have a grant to fund much of the costs. Fuel/ Heating and some winter road maintenance items were higher than budgeted. When revenues are netted against expense it looks like we are at or a small amount over budget 1-2%

FY24:

This fiscal year has just barely started, and some of the FEMA costs could impact short term cash flow, but won't require us to borrow funding.

Bond Bank closing documents are presented for the meeting tonight. The closing is 8/10 and we expect the interest rate to be around 4%. One nice thing with the Bond Bank is that in future years they often restructure loans lowering the rate in some cases.

Sinking Fund Balances:

ARPA: \$436,500

Reappraisal: \$195,044

Equipment: \$40,829

Highway Paving: -\$26,054*

Unemployment: \$50,882

Land Records: \$30,533

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.

Town Manager's Report 7-18-23

Highway:

- Regular maintenance
- Tree work
- FEMA storm response 7/11-7/14

Misc.:

- DFD project continues to move along well. Over 112 services are scheduled and around 15 have been replaced so far. Phase 2 design construction plans for main replacements is 30% complete. There is a possibility that some of this work could be done under the current contract if things are under budget.
- PACIF Board Meetings
- Barlow is working on an MOU that we can sign with Coolidge Lane owners
- Planning continues for the Route 30 pathway, should have updated timeline on report to be given to the SB soon.
- Grandlist is lodged and so far we have a few requests for grievances, but not many.
- On 7/10 we received 4-5" of rain and now are dealing with a FEMA level storm event. The Town has been working to gather information and make repairs to damaged roads and culverts etc. We have also been working with vendors to make repairs to flood damage on Pleasant Street Ext.

Frank Parent moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:48pm, motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Gaiotti, Town Manager