

Town of Dorset, Vermont



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

Meeting Minutes Dorset Selectboard August 22, 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:

None

Bylaw Discussion (Continued):

Megan Thorn noted that the Board would continue the discussion of the bylaw. The July 26th draft was circulated for review and the board began discussion. Megan Thorn noted that some of the references to the HOMES Act information were a bit confusing and she thought there should be some reference or citation to the State Statute to make it clear to applicants that the Town did not create the language. Discussion ensued about the way the Legislature created the language and the fact that it's likely some changes will be made soon relative to parties that can appeal etc. Further discussion was had about the definition of affordable housing in State Statute, changes to appeal laws, and the requirement for some of the regulations to adhere to village centers where water and sewer utilities are available. Much of the input for the changes came from the non-profit housing developers that work in the State. Most of the HOMES Act references are taken directly from Statute and are not able to be edited. Megan Thorn noted that sections: 4505.E, 4401.C and 4401.B should have a citation to the appropriate State Statutes at the beginning of each section (VSA 24 4465 and VSA 4468).

Additional discussion was had about ADUs and some other items where Dorset's regulations are not

inline with State requirements. In these cases the ZA must follow the State guidance instead of the local guidance. Frank Parent inquired about whether the appeal and other regulatory changes were specific to residential projects vs. commercial projects. Brandy Saxton replied that they are limited to residential projects. It was noted that the previous changes discussed were incorporated into the July 26th draft: removing STRs, minor edit to the stormwater section, no building above 1,600' in the RRP zones. Discussion occurred with regard to the approval process and what board members would like to see moving forward.

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

Frank Parent moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the bylaw document with citations in sections 4401 and 4505, motion passed 4-0.

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 Planning Commission meeting is September 5th and Brandy Saxton anticipates have clean maps and documents available for the PC.

It was noted that the changes to the bylaw would go into effect 21 days after the approval on 8/22. That date is September 12, 2023.

Tax Rate Certificate:

It was the consensus of the Board to sign the 2023 Municipal Tax Rate Certificate.

Voter Appropriations:

Megan Thorn noted that the Town had some questions into the Attorney about voter appropriations and the process. It was noted that there are a few large figures and the Town should be able to control the figures from year to year. It was also noted that the discussion would be tabled until a full board was present.

Old Business 8-22-23

New Town Office (No Change):

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 was completed on 8/4. We were able to get permission to take 350 cubic yards from the stream and dig our 2 flood chutes allowing them to take river water constantly. The water level in the work area dropped over 12". The project will exceed budget by around \$8,800, but EWP will allow the extra costs to be added to the grant. Town will have some cost share of around \$10,000 or so.

We have submitted the updated forms, appraisal and BCA to the State, and are pushing them to get it to FEMA for a quicky adjustment of our grant agreement. The State has said that at minimum they

would use funds to make whole the sale price of \$1.2 million and possibly add in some of the business value (\$287,000).

Broadband:

The buildout in Dorset is reaching it's end and in certain parts of Town fidium will be offering service 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 attached. Targeting August/September for the work.

Route 30 Village Concerns:

No complaints as of late for Route 30. Cpl. Thomas has been doing a good job responding to resident calls and other items that come up.

August 22, 2023 Finance Report:

Delinquent Taxes:

\$149,037 as of 8/10/23, last year \$166,067

FY24:

We are 9% expended at the 11% mark in the fiscal year. Still early in the expense side of the year. Monthly expense like payroll, utilities etc.

Tax Bills were mailed on 8/8 and some payments are already coming in.

Sinking Fund Balances:

ARPA: \$436,500 **Reappraisal:** \$195,044

Equipment: \$195,829 **Highway Paving:** \$158,946

Unemployment: \$50,882 **Land Records:** \$30,533

Town Buildings: \$11,383 **Highway Bridges:** \$11,641

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.

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Town Manager's Report 8-22-23

Highway:

- Regular maintenance
- Tree work
- Equipment maintenance

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.
- DFD work has included some shutdowns of the system on 8/7 and 8/14. The admin portion of these does take up a decent chunk of time getting the word out and fielding calls etc.
- PACIF Board Meetings
- Barlow completed an MOU that we can sign with Coolidge Lane owners (attached).
- Planning continues for the Route 30 pathway, should have updated timeline on report to be given to the SB soon.
- Grandlist is billed, tax bills were mailed on August 8th. Many thanks to the hard work of the office staff and our volunteer Wilma Taylor to get things together and mailed quickly.
- FEMA field meeting and inputting Dorset's Request for Public Assistance. We will have until October/November to get our projects written and inputted into the FEMA portal.
- EWP project in the Battenkill is completed, we were able to remove 350 cubic yards (instead of 167) and we did exceed the budget by around \$8,800. EWP will consider the additional expense and add a portion of the costs to the grant agreement.
- Multiple calls and meetings with VEM related to the Chantecleer buyout.

Frank Parent moved and Henry Chandler seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:18pm, motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Gaiotti, Town Manager