

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

February 26, 2024

MEMORIAL BUILDING

4:30 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Board at their next meeting.

Selectmen Present: Poul Heilmann, Chair; Don Hill

Others: Steve Dzubak; John Anderson; Tim Hayes, Road Agent; Erin Meding; Pixie Hill; Ed Shank

Poul announced that in Amy Lewis' absence, the Board will approve the personnel policy and vote on the defining use of STRs as the next scheduled meeting. Poul would like a full Selectboard to vote on those two items.

Scheduled Appointments:

John Anderson and Ed Shank appeared before the Board to review and re-sign the three-year agreement for Mascoma Valley Snow Travelers to have continued use of the roads listed in the agreement. There have been no changes, the roads listed are the same as in the prior three-year agreement. Don asked if there have been any complaints the MVST had heard. John stated the only complaint he is aware of was made by Mr. Argy and he believes that has been resolved with the help of the road agent, police department and Fish and Game. It has been determined the official name of the road in question is #3 Schoolhouse Road, located between Deer Hill and Sanborn Hill. There was some discussion on Schoolhouse Road, Don provided some town history on this road.

Poul asked that the MVST work over the next year to resolve some of the ongoing issues they have had, as much as they can, with the knowledge that the Selectboard is here to support them. Ed Shank stated these trails are only referred to as snowmobile trails because the snowmobile club maintains them. Every trail in Springfield is a multi-use trail; they are used by cross-country skiers, snowshoers, and even fat bikes. Don reminded everyone this does not include ATVs and side-by-sides. Ed pointed out they have been asked about ATVs and he has told those people he was willing to explain what the MVST goes through, but they would need to approach the Selectboard on their own.

John stated the culvert on the Schoolhouse Road trail is in bad shape. Tim Hayes, road agent, pointed out the MVST does have the right to maintain and repair those culverts, with the Selectboard's permission. The MVST can't add a culvert but can replace an existing one. John believes these culverts are stone, so they wouldn't be replaced, just repaired.

Poul stated the Board will sign the agreement but asked that they put some effort into issues that have or may come up. If any help is needed by the Selectboard they are here to help them. The Board thanked John and Ed for all the work the MVST does.

John Anderson and Ed Shank stated that the snowmobile ride-in was successful; it was a great day for all who attended.

Pixie Hill, town clerk/tax collector, appeared before the Board to request permission on election night, March 12th, to bring the ballots to the Town Office and use the Selectboard Office to close off so the books can be verified. Poul made a motion to grant permission to use the Selectmen's Office for vote counting on election night. The motion was seconded by Don. Poul and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Erin Meding, the current chair of the Conservation Commission, appeared before the Board to update them on what has been happening since she took over as chair. Erin took over as chair in December of 2023 and has been attending meetings throughout the area including Ausbon Sargent and LSPA, and bringing that information back to the Conservation Commission. The Commission has chosen their plant of the year and purchased it. It is the native NH Pussywillow; pots have been secured from Spring Ledge on donation so there will be no expense to the Commission on those. Erin is also working with Noel Eastman to get a donation, at least partially, of some loam and soil. The hope is to have that secured in the next couple of weeks.

Erin attended the Road Salt Initiative at LSPA and the Town of Springfield was commended on the salt reduction around Kolelemook. Erin has been asked to attend the Tri-Watershed Committee meetings in the future. Members of the Commission have been maintaining the trails, there was some bridge washout but that has been repaired. The Commission is looking to plan more community events this year, to involve the town. There has been talk amongst the commission of a potential screening of a film called Kiss the Ground. They would also like to have LSPA come out and give a presentation in the Fall to the community on road salt to educate them on other alternatives for property owners that may be a bit more environmentally friendly.

Erin attended a meeting last week at Ausbon Sargent; they have formed a committee to purchase a piece of land they are calling the Byron/Barton Woods. The land is in Grantham, however it is off of Stoney Brook Road. The benefit of this is it would connect to the Reney Forest and it would extend conservation land quite a bit, by another 160 acres. They are looking to raise funds towards this purchase from the surrounding communities. This would connect to the snowmobile trail that exists in the Reney Forest at present.

The current members of the commission are Erin Meding, chair, Brooks Weathers, vice chair, Ken Jacques, treasurer and Emily Cleveland, secretary; Martin Bean and Jeff Lewis are members. The alternates are Tim Fraser, Daphney Klein and Cynthia Bruss.

Josh McGraw came and thanked the Conservation Commission for the letter that was drafted in support of the two large tracts of land in the northwest corner of Springfield. That letter went to the executive committee and received an immediate unanimous approval, which is highly unusual.

The commission would like to have more community involvement. Erin will be hosting an event at her farm sometime in April, and will make sure everyone is aware of that. She will be having Ausbon Sargent come and present about the piece of land and open it up to the community, it will be very informal, but Erin wants to get the information out there to help Ausbon Sargent

raise the funds to obtain this piece of land that even though it isn't in Springfield it is very valuable being an adjacent community.

Ken Jacques made some metal tags, and signs are in the works, for the town trails; these just clearly identify different paths. Cynthia Bruss and Daphne Klein are going to be working on putting all those up. They are also coordinating with Grantham to walk the boundary lines for the town of Springfield and Grantham. The future goal of the commission is to host a quarterly event, starting in the second quarter of this year, for the community in hopes of getting them more involved. Next year, during February break, they would like to hold an activity for young individuals and to get the Kearsarge Regional School District involved to help the high school students get their community service hours doing work with the Commission. Erin stated the Commission would also like to educate the Springfield community on the bee population and the importance of them.

The Board thanked Erin and the commission for all the work they have done and continue to do.

Zoning/Health Officer Report:

REPORT: ZONING COORDINATOR *Board of Selectmen Meeting, Monday, February 26, 2024*

Application for Zoning Permit – APPROVED

None

Other Matters

1. Site visit requested by property owner (J. Chiarella) at 416 Nichols Hill Rd. Mr. Chiarella wanted me to look at his proposed modifications to his existing barn/garage once again. He also wanted to walk his dooryard and discuss another site location for a second structure (barn) that he is potentially proposing sometime in the future. Mr., Chiarella was advised of the 35' setbacks from property lines and was given a copy of the ArcGis wetland overlay map for his property, I further advised him that the wetlands on his property were NOT "designated" a.k.a. "prime" wetlands requiring a 100' buffer zone. It was reinforced during our conversation that he must not disturb any wetland on his property and if there was doubt as to the wetland border, he would need to hire a wetland scientist to make this determination and submit a supporting report to the Zoning Coordinator for review. Mr. Chiarella had additional concerns about the distance of his existing barn/garage to Nichols Hill Rd. I asked him to contact our Road Agent to determine the Town's right of way on Nichols Hill Rd. I then spoke to Tim Hayes, our Road Agent, that evening and he agreed to go visit the property and advise Mr. Chiarella. No application has been submitted to date.
2. Mr. John Chiarella sent me an additional email proposing quite a few land use, zoning and administrative procedural changes. I stated that the Zoning Coordinator did not have authority to make any of these changes and recommended he submit these ideas to the Select Board and/or Planning Boards as appropriate. I believed this more appropriate than forwarding the email myself without explicit permission from Mr. Chiarella.

3. Site visit requested by property owner (M. Hummel) 206 Old Grafton Rd. Mr. Hummel requested I come and look at some proposed building plans he has prior to submitting a Zoning Application. Some of the proposed structures are replacements of existing outbuildings and addition(s) to his existing home. A visit was scheduled for Monday afternoon, 2/26/24

REPORT: HEALTH OFFICER *Board of Selectmen Meeting, Monday, February 26, 2024*

Application for Sewage Disposal System Permit - **APPROVED**

None

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Bray
Zoning Coordinator / Health Officer

<<February 26, 2024>>

Don commented that he appreciated the detail where the Zoning Coordinator reinforced the wetlands issue/concerns with the property owner on Nichols Hill. This is a hole in our zoning; it is not designated so a landowner can go ahead and do site work because we've always allowed site work. But if you do site work and it turns out it was in a wetland you will not get a permit from the state because you are not allowed to touch it before you talk to them. Don stated it's a fascinating problem with our zoning as it's worded, and it is prudent for people that if they have a brook they must be very cautious about doing site work near that prior to getting permits.

Poul made a motion to accept the report of the Zoning Coordinator and Health Officer. The motion was seconded by Don. Poul and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Minutes of February 12, 2024:

Pg. 1, 2nd paragraph:

Mr. Ferland reviewed the project handouts with the Board and audience. The current layout of the design was provided, the signs will be 4ft x 6ft in size.

At the last Board meeting, there was some discussion on the possibility of changing the process of posting meeting minutes. Poul stated, that for now, we will stick with the current process.

Poul made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Don. Poul and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Personnel Manual – approval – Postponed until the next Board meeting.
- b. STR's – Vote on defining use of 30 days or less – Postponed until the next Board meeting.
- c. Revaluation RFP status – The RFP has been published on the Municipal Association classifieds section and George Hildum has sent it out to companies/individuals that he knows that does that type of work.

- d. Organizing and Digitizing Files – There are no updates on this project.

New Business:

No new business to report on.

Board and Department Updates:

- a. Agricultural Commission – They will meet in March.
- b. Buildings and Grounds – The meeting has been noticed; it is on Wednesday February 28th.
- c. Cemetery – They have had some work sessions. The next meeting is in March. Tamara stated they have put all their records into a single binder now.
- d. Conservation Commission – We have been given a full update from Erin Meding.
- e. Energy Committee – There are no current updates. They will need to start working with the Selectboard after the March town meeting when we can focus more time and energy on the next steps with the Community Power Coalition of NH. There was an article that described three towns that went with Standard Power, which is not CPCNH, it is a different community power organization. Now what has happened, because Eversource has dropped its price from \$.22 last quarter to \$.08, which will be for the next sixth months is those towns are now in a bind because Standard Power rates are higher than that. CPCNH is still lower across the board than both the Co-op and Eversource. It is Steve's opinion that CPCNH does a better job of managing their pricing than Standard Power has.
Poul stated this is the type of thing we need to be sensitive to, because whatever is in the press may not be the full story.
- f. Fire Department – No updates to report.
- g. Highway Department – Tim Hayes stated they will be posting the roads tomorrow, six tons or less. They have been working on equipment, cleaning the shop, and will start cutting brush soon. Tim has a meeting with Jeff Milne tomorrow to talk about the Grader Task Force and then Thursday the Task Force will have a meeting at 5pm. The part-time employee is with us until mid-April; everything has been working well with that.

On the task force, Poul reached out to Jeff Milne, who's agreed to lead that, and he has come up with an outline of what the objectives are. The task force consists of Jeff Milne, Tim Hayes, Ken Jacques, B. Manning and Kevin Roberts. Their objective is to assess and determine whether we buy new, used or refurbish the current grader. With the objective of coming with a recommendation at budget time in December. Tim's goal is to nurse the grader through the next couple of years. The objective is just to gather the information, so the town is prepared when the time comes.

- h. Library – They will meet on Wednesday.

- i. Planning Board – There was a consultation with the property owner of the land on the corner of Bowman Road and Main Street. The planning board also reviewed and agreed to the nomenclature for adopted and revision dates.
- j. Police Department – No updates to report.
- k. Recreation Committee – The winter bonfire and potluck are all set for Saturday March 2nd, believe it begins at 5pm.
- l. ZBA – No updates to report.
- m. Administration – Poul stated the work on the new website is progressing well. Tamara has been working on adding minutes from 2023 to the new website. There was discussion on the tabs that will be found on the website. Poul is working on collecting necessary forms that will be loaded to the website.

Last week it was noticed that the FD/Highway garage was out of fuel and there was no heat, believe they ran out of fuel on February 20th. Tamara worked on this throughout the night with Irving and was able to arrange a delivery that night. Irving has been scheduled to deliver every Friday, and for some reason they missed two deliveries. Mason will be installing a new fuel level gage in that tank because the one in there is not accurate. Tamara called Irving again this afternoon to verify that a delivery was not made on Friday, February 23rd. Dispatch has not gotten back to Tamara as to why the delivery did not happen. Tamara is continuing to work with them to determine why these deliveries are being missed.

Tamara reached out to Erin Meding to get the Conservation Commission members to sign their appointment forms.

Tamara did research from a 2014 NH Retirement payment that was refunded to the town back in 2014 for a former employee. NH Retirement is stating the town requested this refund; Tamara doesn't believe the town would've made this request. Historical information was sent today stating that we overpaid this employee, and they were sending us a refund; we still don't know why. This all happened 10 years ago, and we no longer have those records, and the bank no longer has documentation that far back. NH Retirement is requesting the money back now, with interest. Tamara has done what she can to try to prove the town did not initiate this, we just don't have the records. Jill will be cutting the check on Thursday.

We received a draft of the annual report today. Tamara and Jill have gone through it. Tamara will be picking up a hard copy of the draft in the morning for closer review. The report needs to be available to the voters by next Tuesday.

Tamara received a call from a resident asking about water drainage on their property from a neighboring property. Tamara informed them that is not something the town gets involved in, DES needs to be contacted. The neighbor had recently done some work and

went through DES to get approval to do that work. This is something to be handled between the two neighbors and DES.

Our new copier has arrived and will be installed tomorrow.

Correspondence/Signatures:

1. Hazard Mitigation Grant application

Poul made a motion to accept this grant recognizing that it is \$9,000 and the town of Springfield will be responsible for \$1,000 for a total of \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Don. Poul and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Poul read the following statement: “The Selectboard, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as presented in the amount of \$9,000 for updating the local hazard mitigation plan. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost for this project will be \$10,000, in which the town will be responsible for a 10% match (\$1,000).

Poul Heilmann, Board of Selectmen chair, is authorized to sign all documents related to the grant.

2. Land Use Change tax bill

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Jill Hastings

Deputy Administrative Assistant