

Selectboard Minutes 12/03/2015

Minutes

Town of Greenfield

Greenfield Town Offices, 7 Sawmill Road Greenfield, NH

Selectboard's Work Session Minutes

Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015 – 5:00 PM

Selectboard: Chairwoman Karen Day, Selectman Stephen Atherton Jr., Selectwoman Margaret Charig Bliss,

Staff: Administrator Patt,

Public: Gary and Karen Russell, Nicholas Handy – Ledger Transcript reporter, Katherine and Andrew Heck

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Chair Karen Day.

Documents for Review/Approval

- A/P Invoices
- A/P Checks
- Payroll
- Deputy Tax Collector Appt.
- Right to Know Request
- Letter from Resident – Fire/Rescue services
- Employee Vacation Request(s)
- Meeting House Rental – Pancake Breakfast
- Intent to Cut – R5-11
- Meeting House Rental – Theatre Performance
- Fire Dept. Purchase Order(s)- Garage Door Panels, Wall Mount Lockers
- Driscoll Road – Road Deeds

5:00 PM: Selectboard Budget Work Session

At 5:07 pm the Chair held a brief discussion regarding the agenda. The Board undertook to review the documents for review/approval. The Board signed Payroll, A/P Checks, and A/P Invoices. The Board signed the Intent to Cut form, and two Meeting House rental agreements. The Board reviewed and approved the Deputy Tax Collector Appointment of Ann Charbonneau to the position of Deputy Tax Collector. The Board reviewed and approved Fire Department purchase orders for wall mount lockers and to fix one of the overhead doors at the fire station. The Board approved employee vacation requests.

5:00 PM: Cheri Maki Brodeur, Resident

At 5:30 pm Cheri Maki Brodeur visited with the Selectboard to discuss taxes owed to the town. Ms. Maki Brodeur requested a non-public session. On a motion by the Chair and a second by Selectwoman Charig Bliss, the Board voted on a roll call vote to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A IIc, Reputation at 5:30pm. At 6:03pm the Board voted 3-0 to

exit non-public session. The minutes were sealed. It was noted that no decisions were made and that Ms. Maki Brodeur would schedule a meeting with the Tax Collector and the Town Administrator.

6:00 PM: Jim Conway, Resident

At 6:04 pm the Board welcomed Jim Conway to the meeting. Mr. Conway provided a copy of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Critical Bridge Deficiency notice that was previously mailed to the town. Mr. Conway explained that he has concerns about the closure of School House Road due to the status of the bridge and that he was there to ask the Selectboard to re-open the road. The Board reviewed the deficiency letter. The letter states that the School House Road Bridge had been added to the municipal red list in 2011 and that on a recent inspection the culvert had been found to have deteriorated steadily since its addition to the red list. The letter states that deterioration is concentrated in a band at, and below, the water elevation with corrosion representing losses of 70% in the worst areas. The letter notes that the bridge will likely require a reduced weight limit or closure in the near future. The letter states that “it is in need of complete replacement or extensive rehabilitation to carry all legal loads”.

Mr. Conway states that traffic entering onto Rt. 31 is dangerous due to the intersection. He stated that his children have to walk home from the bus drop-off and that in the winter with snow banks there will be no safe route for the children to walk except in the road. The road is narrow and this makes it unsafe once snow banks accumulate. He suggested that DPW could use the DPW 1-ton truck to plow the route that includes Schoolhouse Road. This would alleviate any weight concerns to the Town. Mr. Conway said that he was not satisfied with the letter he received from DPW regarding the closure, and that he would have expected more time to prepare for a bridge closure. He stated that he was unhappy that there was not more information about the bus routes in the letter.

The Chair stated that the Selectboard is open to ‘finding a way to make something work’ but that the Selectboard has to be concerned with the issue of liability. A discussion was held about the weight limit, noting that the DOT letter states that the “deterioration has reduced the safe calculated live load capacity, resulting in a required posting of “WEIGHT LIMIT 10 TONS” for the short-term. However, without action this bridge will likely require a reduced weight limit posting or closure in the near future.” It was acknowledged that school buses are not able to use the bridge as a consequence of the town receiving this letter.

The Chair recognized Gary Russell. Mr. Russell stated that since Russell Station road didn’t get done this year (the road wasn’t elevated as part of reconstruction), if the water level gets high and that road is closed then there won’t be an exit available to the residents. He felt that this presented more of a liability to the town than having an issue with the bridge. He stated that he was aware of a procedure that has been used in some other towns that is available for large culverts such as the one at Schoolhouse Road, where metal studs are welded to the interior of the culvert and then a concrete floor poured and tied into the studs to reinforce the culvert.

Greenfield DPW Road Manager Neal Beauregard joined the meeting and the Chair asked Mr. Beauregard to join the discussion. Mr. Beauregard acknowledged that the DOT had provided the letter, which the Selectboard had reviewed in advance of voting to close the road. He asked if Mr. Russell could provide the name of the company that provides the concrete culvert work. The Selectboard asked Mr. Beauregard if a weight limit posting could be put up so that the road could be re-opened. Mr. Beauregard said that he remembered the issue for the Selectboard (in the past meeting) was the liability associated with the (critical bridge deficiency) letter. The Chair asked which plow truck normally plows Schoolhouse Road and Mr. Beauregard stated that was part of the 1-ton route.

The Chair said that the Board would need to do some more research and potentially discuss the issue with a DOT representative but that they were open to another solution. Mr. Conway said that when he spoke to the State that he was under the impression that the DOT representative expected the town to post the road and then monitor it over time. The Chair asked that Mr. Beauregard contact the DOT for next steps. At 6:25 the meeting ended.

6:30 PM: Kate Mullins, Resident

At 6:45 pm the Board noted that Kate Mullins did not appear at the meeting. The Board discussed the driveway issue at the Mullin's property with Mr. Beauregard, but did not make any decisions. Selectwoman Charig Bliss asked Mr. Beauregard "if this was your property, what would you do to keep the rain and silt out of your driveway (garage)". He replied that he would install a drain in front of the garage. It was noted during the conversation that the driveway itself would not be allowed with the driveway regulations that are required today. Mr. Beauregard said that he and the DPW crew had put steel rods down into the pavement to try to locate the catch basin or outlet (that Ms. Mullins had reported in a previous meeting had been paved over many years ago) but that they didn't find any evidence of a catch basin or drain. A discussion about the 2017 East Road project was held. The Chair stated that the homeowner needs to install a driveway culvert. The Chair asked Mr. Beauregard if the town could do anything when the road gets reconstructed. Mr. Beauregard said that the layout of the road makes it difficult to address the issue. He further stated that the other issue he noticed was that the neighbor up the hill had recently reconfigured the slope of their driveway and yard, and that he felt this was the cause of silt running downhill. He said, "if you look at the road, there is no erosion whatsoever on the sides of the road itself". Therefore the silt is coming from the neighbor's property.

7:00 PM: Neal Beauregard, Greenfield DPW Roads Manager

At 7:00 pm Mr. Beauregard said that he was advancing Cody Vaillancourt for the position of seasonal snow plow operator. Mr. Vaillancourt introduced himself and said that he has been providing seasonal snow removal for approximately five years and that he possessed a DOT medical card but not a CDL license. Mr. Beauregard noted that the DOT card was required by the town but the plow route did not require a CDL as it is the Ford 550 plow route. The Board discussed Mr. Vaillancourt's availability and he assured the Board that his regular work was interrupted during the winter and that he is

available as required by the town. Mr. Beauregard reported that he spoke to Mr. Vaillancourt's employer to be sure that this was clear. It was noted that Mr. Vaillancourt works for a concrete company which shuts down for the winter. There followed a brief discussion of snow removal in Greenfield. On a motion by the Chair and a second by Selectwoman Charig Bliss the Board voted 3-0 to hire Mr. Vaillancourt for the seasonal part-time snowplow position.

Documents for Review/Approval

The Board reviewed the Driscoll Road deeds and discussed the need for language that would address manmade features in the Right-of-Way on one of the deeds. The Board conferred with Mr. Beauregard on the width of the traveled way over the first culvert crossing. The Chair asked if the narrow crossing presented any issues for the snow plow. Mr. Beauregard replied that the driver would need to lift the wing plow in order to negotiate that tight spot but otherwise it should not present a problem. The Board reached a consensus that a meeting at that location should be scheduled with the homeowner if possible.

The Chair noted that at the last meeting the Board had asked Mr. Beauregard to look into the possibility of purchasing a used plow truck rather than getting into a long term lease-to-purchase agreement. She asked Mr. Beauregard if he had made any progress on this request. Mr. Beauregard said that he had done his research and discovered that it was possible to purchase used equipment under certain circumstances. He said that he was skeptical at first but did find a suitable 6-wheeler and had brought several examples of quotes to leave with the Board. He provided examples of plow trucks including a 2006 International with 115k miles priced at \$84,000; a 2005 International with 72K miles priced at \$67,500; and a 2010 Freightliner with 64k miles for \$68,000. He explained the differences between the trucks and stated that while the older trucks had been re-conditioned at the dealerships, and the frames repainted with epoxy paint, he could see how the frames had developed a significant level of rust before they were treated. The newer model, however, was in excellent shape. The Board discussed the concept of purchasing used trucks vs. purchasing a new truck. It was noted that the 2010 would likely last 5-7 years, which would make the replacement cycle shorter but the capital outlay was much lower than purchasing new, and it was possible that financing costs could be reduced, or eliminated.

The Chair asked how the town's 2004 International Plow truck was doing. Mr. Beauregard stated that the truck had had an intermittent starting issue, which had not been traced by the dealer. He said that the truck is very tired and that he can't say for sure if the truck will hold its trade-in value through the winter season. He said there are holes in the body he can put his hand through and the gate is ajar nearly an inch. DPW has done everything it can to straighten the rear gate. There was a discussion on the town's truck and whether the starting problem represented an emergency. Mr. Beauregard said that the town had put greater than \$9000 into the vehicle over the past two years. The goal had been to not purchase two new trucks back-to-back, but now the International was clearly at the end of its municipal life. The 10-wheeler had been purchased and built in 2014.

The Board discussed Greenfield's past purchase history. The Chair noted that at one point the town was paying on four new vehicles at the same time and that had been a burden to taxpayers. Selectwoman Charig Bliss noted that there is a tremendous amount of pressure on the budget when the Capital Reserve Funds outlined in the Planning Board's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) were added. The presentation by the Planning Board had shown that Greenfield is not saving enough funds to deal with known future expenses. The CIP was predicated on purchasing new vehicles. Selectman Atherton stated that the town's capital plan should incorporate a more 'modest spending' program. He stated that based on the information that had been presented, the town couldn't afford a new truck in 2016, and that a new program needed to be developed that represented a more realistic approach to purchasing capital equipment. He stated that 'the town can't afford new vehicles, it can't afford a new fire truck, or a new grader' at this time. Selectwoman Charig Bliss acknowledged that the CIP plan from the Planning Board had represented a reality check for the Board and that it represented a need for a shift in future planning. The Board discussed the need for CRF savings and raised the question of whether purchasing used equipment, as a town-wide program, would lessen the amount of CRF funds needed for savings each year. Mr. Beauregard stated that the town of Westminster Vermont (the previous owner of the 2010 Freightliner) recently changed from a five-year capital plan to a seven-year capital plan. He said that if Greenfield could find a town that takes care of its vehicles the way that Westminster does then it could follow along at the end of their cycle and pick up their used trucks. This would give the town reliable used trucks in very good condition.

The Chair reviewed the cost of the 2010 Freightliner. Mr. Beauregard explained that the truck was compatible with the town's current snow plow equipment and the dealer would honor the trade-in value of \$13,000 that was in place with the town's Mack dealer. The Board discussed the possibility of purchasing a used truck in 2015 and removing the planned payment from the 2016 budget. The Chair asked the Administrator how much capital reserve funds are available for highway equipment. The amount in the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve is \$20,543.36. The Chair asked if it were possible to use 2015 left-over operating budget funds to make up the difference. The Department of Revenue had been asked this question and the answer was 'yes'. RSA 32:8, Limitation on Expenditures was read and the exception to 32:8, RSA 32:10 Transfer of Appropriations was read, noting that the governing body may transfer to 'that appropriation an unexpended balance remaining in some other appropriation', as long as the bottom line budget is not exceeded. A brief discussion of the definition of 'purpose' was held. The town's DRA representative had affirmed that the leftover funds in the DPW road maintenance line item could be used for the purpose of purchasing a plow truck.

The Chair asked if it were possible for the Board to consider purchasing the 2010 Freightliner using a combination of left-over funds and the \$20,000 in the CRF. Selectman Atherton said that he felt it was important to be as transparent as possible and that he would want to have an informational meeting scheduled for the public to attend. The Board agreed that this would be preferable. The Chair asked Mr. Beauregard if the 2010 Freightliner would be available if the Board held an informational meeting next week. Mr. Beauregard said that

he couldn't say. The Chair asked if he could continue looking in case the Freightliner was not available once the Board completed the informational meeting. Mr. Beauregard said that he could and that he had looked as far west as the State of Illinois in his search.

The Board deliberated on the timing (the remaining weeks in the year), the remaining budget, and the RSAs. At the end of a brief discussion it was agreed to post an informational meeting for Tuesday December 8th at 6:30 pm to provide information to the public about the possibility of purchasing a used plow truck in 2015.

At 9:15pm the Board discussed a Right to Know request regarding expenditures for the cemetery fence. Selectwoman Charig Bliss, also a cemetery trustee, said that she would abstain from the conversation. After a brief discussion the Chair motioned with a second by Selectman Atherton to have the Town Administrator call the Chair of the Cemetery Trustees and forward the right-to-know request to the cemetery trustees. The motion passed 2-0 with one abstention.

Adjournment

On a motion by the Chair, and a second by Selectman Atherton, the Board voted to adjourn. The motion carried 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:27 PM.
The minutes are final when approved and signed by the Selectboard. A signed copy is on file in the Selectboard's office.

**Chair, Karen Day Margaret Charig Bliss,
Selectwoman Stephen Atherton Jr., Selectman**