

**TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER**  
**SELECTBOARD / SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES**

**July 16, 2024**

**Present:** William O. Young-Chair, Stephen S. Tarleton – Vice Chair, Road Commissioner, Owen Astbury – Board Member, Melissa Spear –Treasurer, Nancy Robinson-Clerk, Randy Kennedy – Road Foreman & Victoria Young-Administrative Assistant & Lister

**Visitors:** Vicki, Anthony Jr. & Nicolas Scalzilli, Ken Carter, Chuck Lyman-VASA, Roy Godda, Donald McNeil, John Keough, Marsha Fraser –Lister, Dennis Wideman, Chris Stevens, Robert Brenna, Nope Martin, Greg Robinson, Dennis Wideman.

**Zoom:** Joan Wideman, Sarah Janie, Morgan Dillon, Mark Owens, Deborah Morse, Mary Siems, Wendy Banbury, Andrew McLeod, Heather Rabin, John B, Morgan Bilodeau, Tom O’Connor - Exec. Director-VASA,

**Call to Order:** William called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- **\*\* Additions/Changes to Agenda:** Melissa had some bids for FEMA Projects for Hale Hollow Bridge & Dailey Hollow -December 2023 Flooding event. William also moved the Road Reclassification to after “Old Business” and adding an executive session at that time.

**Minutes:** June 25, 2024, July 10, 2024 –Reviewed and accepted as written.

**Don McNeil – Overspending in Montpelier/Legal Action** – Don wanted to discuss the amount of taxes that are assessed coming out of Montpelier with no regards to what the Voters are saying. The Governor vetoed the Tax Bill, and the Legislature overturned the veto. He purposed some options: 1-to withhold the State portion of taxes, to cut spending to 2% increase across the Board, 2-To vote out incumbent's, He would like to request that the Board invite our State Rep and both State Senators to a meeting – to help us to structure a bill that limits property tax increases, and a bill for term-limits.

After some discussion, the Board agreed to invite them to our August 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Highway Report: Updates**–Mowing tractor is having a brake problem and needs to be repaired, Calcium Chloride tank has a hole in it –it is 25 years old. Randy & William will make some calls to get a new one. Randy priced a new one of about \$3,388.00. Discussion of Box Culvert for Pearson Road- very expensive. William had a picture of what is being used up on East Mountain Road in Killington –Randy will contact Craig Mosher and find out some more information.

- Access/Right of Way permit – Deb Ogden –Parcel #06-066 - Signed by the Board
- Access/Right of Way Permit – Jason & Nicole Moore –Parcel #05-013.001 (2) - Signed by the Board
- Municipal Mitigation Grants in Aid FY 25-GA0739 – No Action taken - waiting for more information.
- **Bids:** Hale Hollow Bridge: Discussion of the need for a temporary Bridge while repairing the abutment. We received 3 bids-Olmstead withdrew because they did not have the time to do the job. The other 2 bids included the temporary bridge installation. (1) Barnard Excavation & Logging Inc. - \$59,275.00, (2) Noyes Co. - \$67,595.00 - After discussion Owen made a motion to approve the bid from Barnard Excavation for \$59,275.00 - seconded by William – motion passed.

- **Bids:** Dailey Hollow (by Oldenburg's camp) (1) Barnard Excavation & Logging Inc -\$117,300.00, (2) Noyes Co. - \$98,500.00. (3) Jeff Bridge Excavating - \$130,000.00. After discussion William made a motion to accept Noyes Co. Estimate of \$98,500.00 -seconded by Steve –motion passed.
- FEMA Update Melissa spoke during the Highway time to clarify that the bidding was for flood related damage from the December storm. FEMA will reimburse 75% with an opportunity to receive 100% reimbursement if we go through Hazard Mitigation which Melissa and Randy are setting up.

Nancy asked about the rate of pay for our temporary employee – Eugene Westney – the Board said that it would be the same rate that we paid him last year -\$30.00 / hour. Nancy asked about job applications for new hires-and where we are advertising? Melissa said we are advertising online- have had a few candidates- none of which had the experience that we are looking for. We will put the sandwich board out front again. Nancy also asked about the gravel pile on the field by Oak Chapel –what are we doing with that gravel? Randy replied that we are using it for FEMA projects where needed. Eventually when done with FEMA –any remaining gravel will be moved over to the Highway garage.

- Discussion of Road Reclassification- moved to after “Old Business”-

#### **Treasurer's File:**

- Expense Warrant #22- Reviewed and signed by the Board.
- FEMA Update- PDMG (Program Delivery Manager) is in the office twice a week to help expedite the submission process. Have not received any reimbursements to date. As noted earlier- started working on the December flooding event. Gave an update that we did receive the \$1 M drawdown loan from Mascoma Bank. Paid off the deficit loan of \$423,283.73 Principal – Interest \$19,574.84 and paid the interest on the \$2 M extended Loan of \$91,089.96.
- **Set Tax Rates FY 2025** – Melissa explained the breakdown of the tax rate for FY 25. William made a motion to set the municipal tax rate of 0.4994 which includes the Local Rate of 0.0019 -seconded by Steve- Motion passed.

#### **Clerk's File:**

- **Appoint Agent to Defend Tax Appeals** –After discussion –William made a motion to appoint Michael Tarrant to be the town's Agent to defend tax appeals –seconded by Owen – motion passed.
- **Carpet Update-** Nancy reported that the new carpet has been installed and looks great.

#### **New Business:**

- Next Meeting August 20, 2024
- Property Tax Assessment Discussion – No discussion

#### **Old / Other Business:**

- **ATV Policy - Discussion**
- **Ken Carter- ATV Club** – Ken asked that the Board re-open the two roads. Ken gave a lot of information pertaining to the ATV Club and what they do. Roy Godda presented Letters of Interest addressed to the Town (See attached).

There was much discussion about the Amendment to our ATV Policy done in May 2024. The Board had made a change to Steven's Road and Richardson Road to be for "Locals Only" after being asked by some residents of those two roads for a change because of some large groups of ATV's going through and disturbing the residents with loud machines, trash, and private property being disturbed.

Ken Carter from VASA, Chuck Lyman – VASA, Roy Godda, Dennis Wideman, Chris Stevens, John Keough, Morgan Dillon, Deborah Morse, Robert Brenna, Tom O'Connor -VASA Exec. Director, Vicki Scalzilli & John B. all spoke about the use of the roads. Some would like more roads to be open to the public – some would like less. There was effective communication between the Board, VASA, and Residents. Any issues should be addressed to VASA first – and they will handle them.

At the end of the discussion – William made a motion to withdraw the Amendment and re-open Stevens and Richardson roads to the public for a probationary period until October 31, 2024 – seconded by Steve – motion passed. Next year- the VASA Club will come and talk with the Board before the ATV Policy is signed.

- At the end of the ATV discussion –William made a motion to enter executive session at 8:15 p.m. with Vicky included per 1 VSA 313 (a)(f) for confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. Motion seconded by Steve –motion passed.

Out of Executive Session at 8:35 p.m. - Steve made a motion to set a Road Hearing to reclassify a portion of Baker Hill Road to a Trail. William seconded - motion passed.

**Visitors:** None

**Adjourn:** Being no further business –William made a motion to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. Seconded by Owen – motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Young,

Administrative Assistant