

Selectboard Meeting Minutes May 8, 2023 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm

Call to Order: Andrew Baker called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Margaret Payne, Bob Manners, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: A motion was put forth by Margaret to approve the minutes of April 19 and April 24. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Department Liaison Reports:

Highway Department – Bob said the crew was doing roadside maintenance and some patching.

Arms Library – The Board of Trustees will be meeting on May 12 for an update on finances and other improvements.

Senior Center – Margaret said there are a lot of new programs going on. One is a social history project which will be presented at the Historical Society at the end of June. Good feedback has been received in regard to the recent “facelift” at the center. Director Juli Moreno is applying for a \$100,00 grant through the Office of Elder Affairs. The grant would give seniors technology equipment such as lap tops and phones and would provide training in how to use the devices. Selectboard approval will be needed for the final grant submission.

Town Hall – Terry said the parts for the elevator are expected in the next few weeks. After that, United Elevator will schedule the repair which should take at least two weeks to complete.

Police Department – Both towns have now passed warrant articles supporting shared police services. The inter-municipal agreement will now go to Town Counsel. Once the agreement is signed, members of a police advisory board will be sought.

Village Task Force – The group will be meeting on May 18. FRCOG’s Jessica Atwood is working on a rural downtown district grant to be shared with four towns.

Appointments:

5:45 pm Norman Beebe, Open Space Committee RE: Survey of Mill Road – Some of the land adjacent to the Deerfield River is owned by the town, specifically the former Lillian Davenport property and the Ravine Lot. Norman said that in both the 2013 Open Space Survey and the just completed survey, indicated that people wanted access to trails and to the river from the village. The Open Space Committee has been working on the idea of a trail along the river since 2017. Most recently they hired an engineer to see what a trail connecting Deerfield Avenue with the Mahican-Mohawk Trail might look like and it was determined that such a trail might not be as difficult to create as was first thought. There used to be a road, called Mill Road, that extended from Deerfield Avenue along the river. The Committee wants to see if the road still exists or if it was formally abandoned. The next step would be to get a survey of Mill Road and get easements from landowners along the proposed trail. If Mill Road turns out to be a public way the trail could be put there. Bob said he had been researching town roads and had been unable to track down Mill Road and didn’t know its legal status. There is some confusion about property lines in that area. The Open Space Committee has \$14,000 left from a grant. A surveyor contacted by the committee would do the work for \$4,900. A motion was made by Bob to authorize the Open Space Committee to use \$4,900 of grant funding to pay for a survey of the Deerfield Avenue/Mill Road area. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. This motion was later amended to read

authorize the Open Space Committee to use Woodland Partnership grant funding to pay for a survey of the Deerfield Avenue/Mill Road area. This was received as a friendly amendment and the previous vote in favor was upheld. A motion was put forth by Margaret to authorize up to an hour of legal counsel for discussion of the Open Space Committee's trail project. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

6:00 pm Public Hearing for Proposed Safety Improvement Projects: Old Greenfield Road & Colrain-Shelburne Road (Highway Superintendent Mark Shippee) – The hearing was opened at 6 pm by Andrew. Mark is in the process of applying for two MassWorks grants for Old Greenfield Road and Colrain-Shelburne Road. Old Greenfield Road is 1.8 miles long and the plan would be to do a full-depth reclamation, change culverts, and do drainage as needed for the entire length of the road. The road is often used as a detour for Route 2. There are hiking trails along the road and people use the road to commute to Greenfield. Greenfield is also applying for a grant to work on their end of the road. A motion was made by Bob to authorize the continuation of a MassWorks grant application for the rebuilding of Old Greenfield Road from Route 2 to the town line. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. Colrain-Shelburne Road gets a lot of traffic. The Route 2 end of it has a lot of catch basins that are in need of repair. Colrain has been approved for a grant for its end of the road. Mark said he could apply for two grants but if he had to do only one, he would choose Old Greenfield Road. A motion was put forth by Bob to authorize Mark Shippee to pursue a MassWorks grant for funding for work on Colrain-Shelburne Road. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. When asked for any public comment, April Engle and Patricia Stevenson both expressed their delight and support for the projects. The hearing was closed at 6:16 pm

Old Business:

Streetlights – Terry and Selectboard members met last week with Eversource representatives. Many questions were answered. There is no deadline for accepting the offer of free lights. The demonstration lights do not have shields. Shields are on order and will be installed on the demo lights. It is possible for lights to be fully shielded but the shields that Eversource provides can only shield the front or the back of lights. Dimmable bulbs are not included on the list of offerings to communities. If the town were to purchase the existing street light system, the cost would be approximately \$14,000. Eversource will switch all the demo lights to the lowest wattage (30 watt) bulbs. If the town were to purchase lights, there is a Mass Save program that give a discount of about \$200 per unit. If Eversource operates and maintains the lights the cost would be about \$8,200 annually plus the cost of delivery. Margaret asked if the town goes with the Eversource offer now, can the town switch in the future without paying a penalty. That, and the cost of making a switch, are questions also posed by Andrew. Bob clarified that the meeting last week was informational and the Board had not discussed it until now. He said Eversource seems to be willing to work with the town and make things right, to the best of their ability. John Walsh said the cost of buying the lights would depend on the depreciation of the fixtures at the time. Most of the town's fixtures are seven to ten-year old, with a lifetime of about 20 years. Andrew did not want to make any decisions until he could see a shielded, leveled light and a comparison of the costs of the town owning the lights, with what Eversource is offering. Margaret felt the matter should be paused until all the answers are available. She said she recently spent a lot of time discussing this with residents and estimated that about 2% of the residents had any idea streetlights were being discussed at all. More information needs to be

disseminated. Cynthia Boettner suggested notice in the tax bills, or perhaps a town wide survey of resident's opinions. Jeff Boettner said about 75% of Massachusetts towns now own their streetlights. Margaret said she would like to see a comparison with other towns of similar size to Shelburne. She was concerned that, given the small size of the town and the small number of town employees, would Shelburne have the ability to own, operate, and maintain a street light system. She also said she would like to have the support of the entire town, not just the village. Andrew said Buckland just bought their lights and Shelburne could learn from that town. Bob said that when the existing bulbs burn out, Eversource will replace them with LED bulbs of their choosing. He said it was okay to pause the process, but ultimately it needs to keep moving. A motion was put forth by Margaret to delay the decision on the issue of street lighting in Shelburne until at least August 1 to get answers to questions and give the Energy Committee time to make a report. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Pavilion Project 19 Bridge Street – Students from Franklin Tech will not be able to complete the pavilion until fall. The picnic tables are now back in place. Planters will be placed on top of the piers to protect from possible injuries. Josh Simpson has been consulted about landscaping. Josiah Simpson is willing to help with drawings. Funding sources for landscaping need to be found. The Commonwealth Spaces Fund and the CPA may be sources, but as the area is leased land, it may not be eligible for either of those sources.

West County Senior Services District Board of Managers Appointees – Nothing new to report.

Franklin County Tech School Seeks Shelburne Representative to Serve on District Committee – The only person who had expressed interest in the position is no longer interested in pursuing it.

Relocation of Veteran's Memorial at BSE – The next step is to wait for the Arms Library Board of Trustees to meet and decide if they are willing to host the memorial near the library.

New Business:

Beth Baron RE: Request for Appointment to Shelburne Cultural Council – Board members have reviewed Beth's letter of interest and think she would be a good fit for the Cultural Council. A motion was put forth by Bob to appoint Beth Baron to the Cultural Council. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Vote to Rescind Generator Bid Award to Paciorek Electric, LLC - \$34,100. FRCOG to Bid – Bids are Due May 17, 2023@ 4 pm – One of the bidders had contested the bid award. Anything over \$10,000 needs to be publicly bid. A motion was made by Bob to rescind the bid award made to Paciorek Electric, LLC and have the FRCOG continue the bid process. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Any Other Business:

Information in Tax Bills – The Treasurer has told Terry that the town is required to send information on the CPA along with the next tax bills. It would not be a good idea to send streetlight information with the bills at this time.

Next Steps for CPA – The CPA bylaw language that was approved at Town Meeting now needs to be approved by the Attorney General’s Office. FRCOG has offered to assist in setting up the CPA Committee.

Town Election – A Candidate’s Night will be held on May 11. The election will be on May 16.

Next Meeting – The next Board meeting will be on May 22, 2023.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: John Walsh said it would be wise to request that Eversource install both front and rear shields on each street light. He saw no reason why both types of shields wouldn’t fit. He felt that could solve a lot of issues.

Bob thanked Margaret for her past three years of service. He said it had been a pleasure serving with her and that she had provided a lot of insight and would be missed. Andrew seconded the sentiments.

Adjournment: At 7:16 a motion was made by Margaret to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes.. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary