

**Brandon Select Board Meeting
March 27, 2017**

NOTE: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent board meeting.

Board Members In Attendance: Devon Fuller, Doug Bailey, Seth Hopkins, Brian Coolidge

Others In Attendance: Dave Atherton, Richard Baker, Anna Scheck, Janet Coolidge, Constance Pell, Landon Stewart, Steve Bissette, Bill Moore, Wayne Rausenberger, Linda Stewart, Stephanie Jerome, Dick Kirby, Ethan Nelson, Bill Mills, Lisa Rovi, Lisa Kenyon, Andrew Kenyon

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Seth Hopkins – Chair at 7:01PM.

a) Agenda Adoption – Motion by Doug Bailey/Devon Fuller to adopt the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Approval of Minutes – March 13, 2017 - Select Board Meeting

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Doug Bailey to approve the Select Board Minutes of March 13, 2017. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Town Manager’s Report

Dave Atherton reported the mandatory pre-bid meeting for Segment 6 was held on March 22nd at the Town Hall and there was good attendance. The utility poles are still being set on Franklin Street. VTrans has started to cut trees from Central Park to the Fire Station and have gone up to Conant Square and Grove Street. Twelve sections of the overflow culvert have been installed, sealed and backfilled. There is a public meeting scheduled for March 29th at 6:00PM at the Town Hall to discuss the switch over of the construction area. A mandatory pre-bid meeting was held for the Champlain Street Pump Station Project on March 23rd at the Town Office. In Recreation happenings, the Bow Thayer concert on March 18th was a success with 62 people attending. The Recreation Department plans to establish a Friday Night Winter Concert Series at the Town Hall going forward. Baseball signups have started with an April 3rd deadline for 1st through 6th grades and a May 1st deadline for T-ball. The registration is paperless and is the first program that will feature the addition of a non-resident fee. The Brandon Recreation/Brandon Area Toy Project Carnival is slated for June 8th through the 11th at Estabrook Park and will include concerts, teen dance, pancake breakfasts and vendors. On April 15th the OV baseball team will be working with local parents and kids to spruce up the three fields at Neshobe and Estabrook Park with a BBQ to follow. Bill Moore attended a meeting at the RNESU office with the Principals and Administrators from Neshobe, Leicester, Lothrop and OV, as well as the Pittsford Rec Director,

Randy Adams, to collaborate to offer all-day programming for kids in the summer. With regard to economic development, Mr. Moore attended an Economic Development Conference with Chairman Hopkins in Montpelier on March 22nd and came away with more ideas regarding work-force training and infrastructure improvements that make the region more appealing to potential employers. The first tax stabilization will be presented to Gold Star Feeds.

4. Comments for Items Not on the Agenda

Andrew Kenyon read a letter regarding the tree removal along Route 7 (letter attached). Seth Hopkins stated the Town Manager provided Mr. Kenyon a small version of the Tree Plan and the larger version was available for viewing at the meeting. Mr. Atherton reported the trees have to be cut down before April 1st because of a bat habitat for an endangered bat. The trees with blue marks can be cut after April 1st and the trees marked with white dots will be trimmed. There are under 80 trees that will be removed and there will be plantings upward of 200 trees for the project. The lists of the trees and species is available for viewing. There will also be more vegetation planted in the parks and in planters throughout the Town in addition to the tree plantings. Many of the trees are being removed because they are rotten and have more of an opportunity to fall after the project. Mr. Hopkins stated there have been people questioning the removal of the trees, which is a reasonable question and the Select Board does realize the importance of trees. Mr. Hopkins encouraged anyone interested in obtaining more information about the Tree Plan to visit the Town Office to review the detailed Plan to get an idea of what the result will be. Segment 6 has been in the plans for many years and will cause some disruption for a little while. It is hoped that people will understand that in the end it will be a benefit to the Town. Mr. Hopkins thanked Mr. Kenyon for the comments presented. Dave Atherton stated the Town has been working with UVM regarding a tree maintenance program so that when the trees get larger it will look like a canopy and branches will be kept out of utility lines. Bill Moore asked if the road will be widened and Mr. Atherton advised that some spots will be wider, but the Town is not making Route 7 wider, however, the sidewalks will be made wider. Doug Bailey stated this plan has been 40 years in the making. Many trees have to come down to dig out the cement slabs and arborists have indicated which trees need to come down for safety reasons. The project is also replacing sewer lines and the intent is not to cut down the trees due to motorists. It is something that has to happen due to the project. Ethan Nelson asked if there is a town arborist and it was noted that Wayne Kingsley is the Tree Warden.

Linda Stewart questioned if the bridge near the barbershop will be a one-lane or two-lane road. Dave Atherton reported this is private property owned by Bob Read and it is his access and he will be paying for the bridge. It is thought that it is going to be a one-lane bridge, but Mr. Atherton is not sure as it is privately owned property.

5. Discuss Senior Citizens Center Request for Sign Placement Exemption

Seth Hopkins advised that the Select Board received a letter from the Senior Center requesting an exemption for an off-premise sign on private property. Anna Scheck has been unable to discuss this item with Kathy Mathis, President of the Senior Center. Ms. Scheck advised that off premise signs are not allowed and suggested there are other areas in town where the sign could be placed. Mr. Hopkins noted sandwich signs from other groups have been located in the park.

Mr. Hopkins stated the Select Board does not have the jurisdiction to grant exemptions. Doug Bailey agreed that the Select Board cannot grant an exemption and does not see that the Select Board can move forward on this request. Devon Fuller stated the park could potentially be a place for the sign and agreed that it would be the only solution, but perhaps it is something that will need to be addressed going forward. Ms. Scheck also spoke with Bernie Carr regarding the possibility of using the bus station sign. Mr. Hopkins stated the Board recognizes the Senior Center does valuable work, but the Land Use Ordinance is something the Town as a whole decided on and it is not appropriate to do spot zoning exemptions. No action was taken by the Select Board and the Zoning Administrator will respond to the Senior Center on behalf of the Select Board.

6. Appointments

a) Budget Committee

Seth Hopkins stated there was discussion at the last meeting regarding the possible statutory limits on the number of members on committees. Dave Atherton stated in checking with VLCT, because it is an advisory Committee, not a decision making Board, the Select Board can appoint as many members as they would like on the Budget Committee. Seth Hopkins stated there are six people interested in participating on the Budget Committee and from a statutory point, it is determined there is no limit. Doug Bailey stated the current committee members have been productive and he did not think the Committee needs to go to six members. The meeting is warned as a public meeting and all are invited to attend. Devon Fuller also did not see the need for a 6-member Committee.

Motion by Doug Bailey/Brian Coolidge to appoint Janet Coolidge, Anthony Paduto, Carol Bertrand and Doug Sawyer as the Budget Committee for the next year. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Seth Hopkins thanked the other two people who expressed interest and invited them to attend the budget meetings.

7. Proposed Fund Balance Policy

Seth Hopkins stated the proposed Fund Balance Policy was discussed at the last meeting and Mr. Hopkins made edits based on the discussion.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to approve the Fund Balance Policy as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

8. Tax Stabilization – Gold Star Feed & Grain

Brian Coolidge recused himself from the discussion on this topic.

Bill Moore brought forth a request from an applicant for tax stabilization. Mr. Moore reported a couple of years ago the Town had hired an Economic Development Consultant to draft a Tax

Stabilization Policy that is based on investment the property owner puts into their property. Gold Star Feed and Grain has purchased the Blue Seal Feeds building that is assessed at \$223,600.00 and have invested \$296,000.00 in improvements thus far in the structures and grain elevators. They have submitted a letter and invoices to the Economic Development Manager. Mr. Moore advised this would make them eligible for a six-year tax stabilization contract and requested the Select Board consider approval of the tax stabilization that will hold their municipal tax and appropriations. The school education tax portion is outside the Town's authority. Mr. Moore stated this program will encourage business owners to invest in their properties. Devon Fuller clarified that the property will be reassessed after the six years and will be taxed in accordingly. Mr. Moore confirmed there will be a town-wide reappraisal in 2018.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Doug Bailey to approve the tax stabilization for Gold Star Feed & Grain for a six-year term. **The motion passed – Brian Coolidge recused from voting.**

Landon Stewart stated there have been some other improvements made since January and it is hoped that within the next year there will be improvements in efficiencies. Doug Bailey asked what the expected peak employment will be. Mr. Stewart stated if sales continue to grow, they will add more trucks and potentially add a second shift, but it will depend on sales. They were hoping to get 12,000 total tons of sales this year and last month they already reached 1000 tons for the month. They are pleased with how the business is growing and progressing.

9. Approve Certificate of Highway Mileage

Seth Hopkins advised there is a Class 1 state highway change for .298 miles of Route 7 to reclassify the highway due to Segment 6. Dave Atherton stated the roads are being reviewed and more will be changed next year.

Motion by Doug Bailey/Devon Fuller to approve the change to the Certificate of Highway Mileage to reflect the .298 change. **The motion passed unanimously.**

10. Reconsider Road Posting

Seth Hopkins received a request from Tracy Wyman to postpone discussion of this item to the next meeting. The Select Board agreed.

11. Fiscal

a) General Fund Warrant – March 27, 2017 - \$115,792.77

Motion by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to approve the warrants of March 27, 2017 in the amount of \$115,792.77. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Doug Bailey reported he spoke with Jackie at the Town Office concerning the electric bill, noting it is showing a sizeable decrease due to the solar project. It is good to see the savings and Mr. Bailey thanked Mr. Atherton and Mr. Moore for getting the solar field on town property.

The Board recessed at 7:38PM to convene as the Board of Liquor Commissioners.

The Board reconvened at 7:41PM.

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Devon Fuller to enter into executive session at 7:42PM pursuant to 1VSA 313(a)(1) to include the Town Manager and Town Attorney for confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. **The motion passed unanimously.**

12. Executive Session Pursuant to 1V.S.A. 313(a)(1) – Confidential Attorney-Client Communications Made for the Purpose of Providing Professional Legal Services to the Body

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Devon Fuller to come out of executive session at 8:12PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was no action required.

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Brian Coolidge to enter into executive session at 8:13PM pursuant to 1VSA 313(a)(3) to include the Town Manager regarding the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee. **The motion passed unanimously.**

13. Executive Session Pursuant to 1V.S.A. 313(a)(3) – The Appointment or Employment or Evaluation of a Public Officer or Employee

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Brian Coolidge to come out of executive session at 8:20PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was no action required.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to enter into executive session at 8:26PM pursuant to 1VSA 313(a)(3) to include the Town Manager regarding the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee. **The motion passed unanimously.**

14. Executive Session Pursuant to 1V.S.A. 313(a)(3) – The Appointment or Employment or Evaluation of a Public Officer or Employee

Motion by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to come out of executive session at 8:55PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was no action required.

17. Adjournment

Motion by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:56PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary