

Draft Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
April 6, 2021
7:00 pm Virtually via Zoom
Regular Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
John Malcolm
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort
Rich Hulett

Others in Attendance:

Kristin Powers
Deb Hawkins
Julie Mach
Chuck Weeden
Harry Van Meter
Harley Cudney
Tom Collard
Frank Nelson
Jonas Rosenthal
Colin Stabile
Paul & Michelle Tilander
Keith Mason
Ray & Beth Duquette
Jennifer Sullivan

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:03 pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items
 - a. Additions:
 - West Pawlet Wi-Fi – New Business.
 - b. Deletions:
 - Security Grant – nothing yet to report.
3. Introduction of those present by chairperson.

4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
 - Motion made to approve the minutes of March 23, 2021, with an addition to the attendance list and clarification within number 7, item D.
 - Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Bob Jones, John Malcolm, Rich Hulett, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by local citizens and visitors:
 - None.
6. Announcements:
 - None.
7. Reports:
 - A. Zoning Administrator's Report:
 - Mr. Rosenthal spoke to and addressed questions regarding a zoning application received/permit issued for a storage building at 541 Briar Hill Road. Currently the permit is not yet in effect due to standard procedure, and requires further attention. Mr. Rosenthal suggests a site visit to clarify, however requests that law enforcement, as well as additional parties, are present to ensure an effective visit.
 - Motion made to establish law enforcement presence for Mr. Rosenthal and others to make a site visit to 541 Briar Hill Rd. to review this permit.
 - Mover : Rich Hulett
 - 2nd : Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion : Mr. Mason offered information from Article 5 of the Unified Bylaws regarding road frontage requirements for building/development.
 - Result : John Malcolm, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett, Bob Jones – in favor. Approved.
 - B. Planning Commission's (PPC) Report:
 - No report at this meeting.

C. Road Foreman's Report:

- Road Foreman, Keith Mason, shared a report with the Board:
 - Tree removal is complete on Herrick Brook Road.
 - Spring grading has begun, as most roads have settled, and calcium chloride will be applied as necessary.
 - Work funded by grants is progressing well, and meetings will be attended to discuss late summer grant opportunities from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.
 - Mr. Mason fielded several questions regarding road/traffic signs missing and in need of replacement.

D. Assessor Report:

- No report at this meeting. Mr. Malcolm shared that the Boards of Civil Authority and Board of Abatement issued warnings regarding upcoming back-to-back meetings on 4/27/21.

E. Town Clerk's Memo:

- Town Clerk, Deb Hawkins, shared a report with the Board:
 - The Board of Abatement of Taxes and Board of Civil Authority both have meetings on 4/27/21 and have been warned accordingly.
 - The Secretary of State's Office issued a check to the Town of Pawlet for some Town Meeting expenses.

F. Town Treasurer's Memo:

- The Board reviewed a memo from the Treasurer's office, including an overview of payroll, accounts payable, monies from the General Fund, Highway, Wastewater.
- Per the question from the regular meeting on 3/23/21 regarding exempt properties; statutorily exempt properties are removed from Grand List no education taxes are assessed and therefore the town is not paying taxes into the Ed fund on these properties.
- Motion made to approve the warrants.

- Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Rich Hulett, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.
- G. Emergency Management Director's Report:
- The Board reviewed a report from the Emergency Mgt. Director:
 - Covid-19 updates continue to be posted daily to the Facebook page.
 - Attended and participated in multiple calls and meetings for training, planning and informational purposes.
 - Initiated the annual updated of the Local Emergency Operations Plan.
 - Updated the RRPC Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement and RRPC Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement Designated Officials Form.
- H. Health Officer's Report:
- The Board reviewed a report from the Health Officer:
 - Performed a rental housing code inspection at the request of a tenant. Violations found and a correction plan is in place with the landlord.
 - Investigated a sewer leak into a basement of an unoccupied bank-owned building. Proper steps taken for initial repairs and requirements shared with the bank in order for habitation.
- I. Waste Water Treatment Facility:
- Mr. Beecher provided an update from the WWTF, sharing that Mr. Hulett has been working to become better acquainted with the plant to determine improvements, large and small, that can help advance the current operations.
 - Ms. Mach shared news of possible incoming federal funding for sewer plants.
8. Old or unfinished business:
- Inclusivity Discussion:

- Meeting attendees acknowledged and contributed to the ongoing discussion of inclusivity/diversity in Pawlet. There was general agreement that this topic will continue to be ongoing. Jessica Van Oort mentioned a possible citizen group, who may be gathering to further discuss this matter.
 - Harley Cudney, Julie Mach and Keith Mason all offered comments, suggestions and ideas on this topic.
 - Town-Owned WP Property Update:
 - Rich Hulett shared that he and Bob Jones visited the property and determined there were not items of value, and that the next steps include a robust cleanup of scrap and garbage.
 - The Board unanimously agreed to allow Rich Hulett to proceed with contacting appropriate parties to clean up the property, and proceed accordingly (pending price caps). Due to the health concerns posed by lingering debris on the property, this is a priority.
 - Radar-Controlled Speed Signs:
 - Motion made to proceed with purchasing the two radar-controlled speed signs with the condition that the price matches previous estimates (currently allocated in budget).
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: Check with Mr. Mason re: products to order.
 - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.
 - Mr. Malcolm announced that the portion of the Pawlet/Rupert Mountain Rd. beside his home has been posted for slow moving traffic due to turtle crossing.
9. New Business:
- Meeting Format Discussion:
 - The Board discussed prospects of meeting in person again, and the various requirements of open meeting law. Anticipated updates coming from the state-level around May 1, 2021 in regards to municipal meetings. No decisions made, and meetings remain virtual until further notice.
 - Update from on Town business from Attorney:
 - Jessica Glass Pollack, of Green Mountain Law, provided answers to several questions received regarding ongoing litigations.

- Wi-Fi at the Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF):
 - Jessica Van Oort shared an opportunity for a Wi-Fi hotspot located at the WWTF.
 - Motion made to proceed with pursuing a Wi-Fi hotspot installed in the sewer plant.
 - Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.

10. Public Comment:

- None.

11. Motion made to Adjourn at 9:06 pm

- Mover: Jessica Van Oort
- Second: Bob Jones
- Discussion: None.
- Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett - in favor. Approved (Unanimous)