

**Final Minutes**  
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET  
March 23, 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  
Ray & Beth Duquette  
Julie Mach  
Harley Cudney  
Chuck Weeden  
Frank Nelson  
Rhonda Schlangen  
Paul Tilander  
Maureen Brown  
Keith Mason  
Fred Stone  
Bob & Martha Schoenemann  
Jennifer Sullivan  
Tom Collard

**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:
    - Letter from resident to be read during inclusivity declaration discussion – Old/Unfinished Business
  - b. Deletions:
    - None.

3. Introduction of those present by chairperson.
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
  - Motion made to approve the minutes of March 9, 2021, as presented.
    - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
    - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rich Hulett
    - 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:
    - No report at this meeting.
  - B. Planning Commission's (PPC) Report:
    - PPC Chairwoman, Jessica Van Oort, submitted a report to the Board summarizing the events which have led to a vote in the affirmative of an amended draft of Pawlet's Unified Bylaws. The PPC has sent the draft to the Selectboard seeking their review and approval. Pending the Selectboard's approval, the draft will be sent to the Natural Resources Board whom, ultimately, will be able to add Pawlet to their list of 10-acre towns. Discussion ensued.
      - Motion made to establish a public hearing to discuss this, in conjunction with the regularly scheduled meeting, on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm via zoom.
        - Mover: John Malcolm
        - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bob Jones
        - Discussion: None
        - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett
    - Upcoming focus items include work on the Town's Enhanced Energy Plan, larger updates to the bylaws, as well as zoning issues that affect economic development.

C. Road Foreman's Report:

- Road Foreman, Keith Mason, shared a report with the Board:
  - Roads seem to be sealing down nicely, with only minor mud problems on most roads. Crushed stone has been laid on Kelly Hill and Towslee Hill to maintain passage.
  - Maintenance is required on one of the trucks, and general spring maintenance is ongoing.
  - Mr. Mason sourcing pricing from Hunter Excavation for tree work on Herrick Brook Road.
    - Motion made to support the Road Crew in hiring Hunter Excavation at the quoted price of \$8500.00 for the required tree work on the Herrick Brook Road grant-funded project.
      - Mover: Rich Hulett
      - 2<sup>nd</sup>: John Malcolm
      - Discussion: None
      - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort and Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.
  - The Town is on track for meeting the 2022 RRPC road inventory deadline.
  - The Highway Department came in well below budget for Winter 2020-2021, and plans to allot excess funds towards additional gravel.
  - Mr. Mason suggested a letter of appreciation written for the individuals who helped complete last year's project.
    - Motion made to draft a thank you letter to the parties involved.
      - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
      - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bob Jones
      - Discussion: None
      - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.

- Ms. Mach reported a defaced road sign and requested the Road Crew take care of this. Mr. Jones shared further observations of vandalism.

D. Assessor Report:

- No report submitted at this meeting; however, Mr. Malcolm shared an update regarding the tax exemption topic discussed at the last meeting. The Merck property in question falls within the statutory exemption classification. Non-statutory exemptions are voted on every five years.
  - Mr. Mason inquired as to whether or not a statutorily tax-exempt property is removed from the education grand list or if the tax payers need to cover this. This topic requires further investigation.

E. Town Clerk's Memo:

- Town Clerk, Deb Hawkins, shared a report with the Board:
  - Several Highway Permits require signature.
  - Dog licensing/renewals are due by April 1, 2021.
  - Discussions are taking place on the state level regarding the possibility of 100% mailing of ballots for the General Election.

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, and the third WW collection info.
- NEMRC Agreements require signature, and following discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to authorize Julie Mach to sign on behalf of the Town.
- Motion made to approve the warrants.
  - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>: John Malcolm
  - Discussion: None.
  - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Rich Hulett, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.

- Ms. Mach shared with the Board information regarding a security grant through the state
  - G. Emergency Management Director's Report:
    - No report at this meeting.
  - H. Health Officer's Report:
    - No report at this meeting.
  - I. Waste Water Treatment Facility:
    - Mr. Beecher provided an update from the WWTF.
8. Old or unfinished business:
- Inclusivity Declaration –
    - Jessica Van Oort began the conversation by sharing that two possible action items, taken from the document provided/discussed at the last meeting, would be: explaining what acronyms mean during a meeting (example: PPC is Pawlet Planning Commission) and establishing a Youth Advisory Member for the Selectboard as well as other Town organizations/boards.
      - Further discussion ensued regarding the gathering of resources compiled by our Community Connector, Sara Young, making them more widely available.
      - Bob Schoenemann shared experiences of serving as a community liaison, which led to question of whether or not these responsibilities have been taken over on a state level.
      - Conversation ensued, with contributions from several attendees, regarding the notion of an inclusivity statement and what this means for Pawlet. Ultimately, this topic is to be added to the next meeting for continued discussion.
9. New Business:
- Jessica Van Oort shared a suggestion, based on community feedback, that building permits should include language indicating that Assessors will review building projects upon their completion. Also suggested an opportunity to educate the townspeople on home occupation permits and other helpful facts that residents may not be privy to.
  - Mr. Weeden inquired as to when the Highway Department's old Dodge would be put out to bid. Mr. Beecher replied, stating that this is a topic still to be determined.
10. Public Comment:

- None.
11. Motion made to Adjourn at 8:53 pm
- Mover: Jessica Van Oort
  - Second: Rich Hulett
  - Discussion: None.
  - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett - in favor. Approved (Unanimous)