

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
April 4, 2023
7:00 pm
Pawlet Town Hall
122 School Street, Pawlet, VT
& Virtually via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort
Rich Hulett
Perry Brown

Others in Attendance:

Kristin Powers
PEG TV
Frank Nelson
Rose Smith
James Sheldon
John Davis
Val Davis
Judy Coolidge
Steve Williams
Elizabeth Gibson
Jennifer Sullivan
Michael Allen
Nancy Morlino
Julie Mach
Denny Morrissette
Ray & Beth Duquette
Harley Cudney
Merrill Bent
Lisa Wright

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Introduction of those present, virtually and in person.
3. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
 - a. Additions:
 - Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors:
 - Judy Coolidge
 - James Sheldon
 - John & Val Davis
 - Dennis Morrissette
 - Old/Unfinished Business:
 - Bike & Pedestrian (Sidewalk) Grant
 - Executive Session
 - To discuss confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body
 - To discuss labor relations agreements with employees
 - b. Deletions: None.
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting(s).
 - Motion made to approve the minutes of March 21, 2023, as printed.
 - Mover: Rich Hulett
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors:
 - Judy Coolidge & Rose Smith, Pawlett Historical Society
 - Rose reported that she, Perry Brown and Sue LaPorte met to look at the Town Hall Auditorium to assess the electrical capabilities of the space, as they relate to the needs of the upcoming 50th anniversary event. Rose requested that the Board install an appropriate cooling system for the auditorium.
 - Discussion ensued amongst the Board, and the building liaisons will obtain quotes and estimates.
 - The Board addressed the Historical Society's requested assistance for cemetery tree removal and clean-up. The Board asked that the Historical Society gather a second estimate, as well as contact Green Mountain Power, and update the Board on cost before moving forward.
 - James Sheldon, Giving Tree Cannabis:

- Mr. Sheldon requested the Board's support of streetlights, installed by Green Mountain Power, on power poles at both ends of the Giving Tree Cannabis property in West Pawlet.
 - Motion made to draft a letter supporting the existing lighting, installed by Green Mountain Power on the power poles at Giving Tree Cannabis in West Pawlet, VT.
 - Mover: Rich Hulett
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: Jessica Van Oort stated the concern of not having a physical copy of the ANR's notice of possible violation for improper lighting.
 - Result: Bob Jones, Rich Hulett, Perry Brown – in favor. Jessica Van Oort – opposed. Approved.
- John & Val Davis, West Pawlet Residents:
 - John Davis spoke to ongoing litigation within the Town, and continued to express gratitude and appreciation for Town Attorney, Merrill Bent, for her service.
- Dennis Morrisseau, West Pawlet Resident:
 - Inquired about the old railroad depot building, and proposed a suggested use for the building.
 - The Board, with support of Michael Allen, spoke to the State's position on this building as it currently stands, which is that it be utilized for the purpose of supporting the Rail Trail or to be relocated from state right-of-way property.

6. Announcements: None.

7. Reports:

A. Zoning Administrator's (ZA) Report:

- Nancy Morlino shared a report from the ZA's office:
 - 4 permits approved in the month of March and all scanning of previous permits have been completed.
 - A notice of violation was submitted for unpermitted trailer occupancy.
 - Nancy attended a Cannabis Control Board permitting meeting.
 - A question was raised regarding the online availability of permits.

B. Planning Commission's Report:

- Jessica Van Oort shared a report from the PPC:

- The PPC reviewed the proposed updates to the Town's Unified Bylaws, which have been proposed with the assistance of Ed Bove of the RRPC.

C. Road Foreman's Report:

- Highway Foreman, Dale Decker, shared a report with the Board:
 - Work is ongoing, tending to mud season road conditions and tending to equipment maintenance.
 - The Vermont Land Trust is surveying the property at the Town Garage to assess use and property lines.
 - The Highway Department applicant has accepted the position of Highway Department Crew Member.
 - VT AOT grant applications are due April 15, 2023.

D. Assessor Report:

- Lisa Wright shared about a proposed bill (H480), moving swiftly through the legislature, which has the potential to impact small towns in Vermont. This bill suggests that the state may take over town reappraisals and grand lists. Lisa encouraged the Selectboard to review this proposed bill, and to consider drafting a letter in opposition to the legislature.
 - Motion made to draft a letter from the Selectboard in opposition of H-480, to be sent to local representatives and appropriate Senate representatives.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: Jessica to draft a letter based on the VALA statement
 - Result: Approved.

E. Town Clerk's Memo:

- Deb Hawkins shared a report with the Board:
 - Bob Jones signed ten Excess Weight Fleet Permits
 - Motion made to approve the 1st and 3rd class restaurant/bar license and outside consumption permit for Rubber Boot Farm, Inc. (Barn Restaurant & Tavern).
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved

F. Town Treasurer's Memo:

- Town Treasurer, Julie Mach, shared a memo with the Board, including: an overview of payroll, accounts payable, monies from the General Fund, Highway and Wastewater.
- Pawlet received \$7,072.00 for the reappraisal fund and \$832 for the FY23 equalization payment.
- Motion made to approve Payroll Warrant #23053 for \$9,326.60 and Accounts Payable Warrant #23054 for \$34,520.00
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.

G. Emergency Management Director's Report:

- Bob Morlino shared a report with the Board for March of 2023:
 - Submitted an RFP for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan consultant.
 - Attended several trainings, along with Jay Leubke and Jackie Becker.
 - Obtained Selectboard approval for the LEMP, NIMS and Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement.

H. Health Officer's Report:

- Jennifer Sullivan shared findings following inspections of unpermitted living conditions in West Pawlet.

I. Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF):

- Mike Beecher relayed information regarding updates and repairs to the WWTF to the Board.

J. Facilities Report:

- None.

K. Mettawee School Board (MSB) Report:

- The MSB hosted their community engagement event. Though sparse attendance, there were valuable insights and ideas discussed.

8. Old or unfinished business:

- Bike & Pedestrian Grant (sidewalk grant): Jessica reported that at this time, the Rutland Regional Planning Commission is prepared to draft a contract to be reviewed and potentially adopted by the Board. The Board unanimously agreed to

request that Steffanie Bourque, RRPC, send a draft agreement to be reviewed by the Board prior to the next meeting.

9. New Business:

- None.

10. Public Comment:

- Frank Nelson reported that the youth fishing weekend is scheduled for the last weekend in April.
- Harley Cudney inquired about where to direct a bill for locksmith fees for the Library. The Board determined this is a Town expense due to the Library being a Town-owned building.
- Michael Allen shared that on Thursday April 20th, an event will be held at the West Pawlet Fire Department for the West Pawlet village planning initiative.

11. Motion made to enter Executive Session to discuss confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body, as well as to discuss labor relations agreements with employees at 8:32pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2nd: Rich Hulett
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

12. Motion made to exit Executive Session with no decisions made at 9:12pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2nd: Rich Hulett
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

13. Motion made to Adjourn at 9:13pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- Second: Perry Brown
- Discussion: None.
- Result: Approved.