

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
July 9, 2024
7:00 pm
Pawlet Town Hall
122 School Street, Pawlet, VT
& Virtually via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort

Others in Attendance:

PEG-TV
Kristin Powers
Harley Cudney
Frank Nelson
Cori Rail
Greg Poelker-McKee
Ruth Lampi
Lyndsi Barnes
Linda Lynton
Sue LaPorte
Lauren Herbert
Nancy Morlino
Bob Herbert
Hannah Herbert
Steve Williams
Barbara O'Conner
Julie Mach
Tom Covino
Molly Beverage (zoom)
Mike Robinson
Canna Williams
Jill Marsano (zoom)
Deb Hawkins (zoom)
Harry Van Meter (zoom)
Allison Copquin (zoom)
Benjamin Dossett (zoom)

Kevin Mason (zoom)

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:04pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher, with the Pledge of Allegiance and a review of the Rules of Procedure.
2. Introduction of those present, virtually and in person.
3. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
 - a. Additions:
 - Bike/Ped Grant Update – Old/Unfinished Business
 - b. Deletions: None
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
 - Motion made to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 25, 2024, as printed.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors:
 - Greg Poelker-McKee, Rutland Regional Planning Commission
 - Pawlet's grant application was successful for the Municipal Technical Assistance Program; one of two approved in Rutland County. The purpose of this funding will be to help with the function and cost for the West Pawlet Wastewater Treatment Facility.
 - Jill Marsano, VTums, contributed to the conversation, clarifying what infrastructure is most necessary at the WWTF.
 - Greg Poelker-McKee requested a member of the Board with signatory power sign the Statement of Work associated with the program.
 - Motion made to sign the Statement of Work for the Municipal Technical Assistance Program.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
6. Announcements: None.
7. Reports:

A. Zoning Administrator's (ZA) Report:

- Nancy Morlino shared a report with the Board:
 - There is a scheduled DRB meeting on 7/17 at 7:00pm for a variance.

B. Planning Commission's Report:

- No report at this meeting, however the hearing for the potential bylaw appeal and amendment is on 7/22 at 7:30pm and 8:00pm, virtually and in person.

C. Road Foreman's Report:

- Highway Foreman, Damon Ferenc, provided a report to the Board:
 - Throughout the last two weeks the Highway Department has:
 - Assessed and completed road clean-up following storms.
 - Installed new door on mowing tractor.
 - Began ditching on Rupert Hill Road, replacing a culvert in the process.
 - Continued hauling stone and roadside mowing.
 - Removed plow and wing from new truck for summer service.
 - Damon met with Wade Masure of VLCT and Steffanie Bourque of RRPC.
 - Upcoming projects to include:
 - Continued roadside mowing and ditch work.
- Motion made to purchase the appropriate iPad for the Highway Department.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
- The School St. Bridge project is moving along smoothly, and Daniels Construction feels the anticipated 6-week timeline is still on track.
- The new truck has been delivered and is in service.
- Canna Williams requested attention be brought to high rates of speed in the Pawlet village.
 - Mike Robinson echoed this sentiment on Route 153.

D. Assessor Report:

- The Assessor's Office provided a report to the Board:
 - Grievance hearings were held on Monday, 7/1, with inspections and deliberations following. Results of grievance notices were mailed on Tuesday 7/2.
 - Grievance hearings were recorded per updated OML statute, effective 7/1.
 - The Grand List has been lodged with the Town Clerk following grievance changes.
 - Mike Beecher received a letter from Tyler Technologies regarding the reappraisal work that they will be completing.

E. Town Clerk's Memo:

- No report at this meeting, however Deb Hawkins is working to communicate with electricians regarding the necessary work for the permanent PEG recording equipment.

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, Wastewater.
- Motion made to approve Payroll Warrant #24070 for \$9,015.63 and Accounts Payable Warrant #24071 for \$18,936.76.

Mover: Jessica Van Oort

2nd: Bob Jones

Discussion: None.

Result: Approved.

- The fiscal year has been closed at this time, however some invoices from this meeting may alter the final figures provided.
- Julie Mach requested that the Board set tax rates and wastewater user rates.
 - Beginning with Wastewater user fees, Julie provided the Board with two options.
 - Motion made to proceed with option two, to utilize \$15,000.00 of the appropriation for the Wastewater user fee. This matches the reported budget.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved.
 - The Board and Julie discussed the property tax rates.

- Motion to set the General Fund rate to \$0.3135, Highway rate to \$0.3751, the Local Agreement to \$0.0066. The Homestead Education rate is \$1.7172, the Non-Homestead Education rate is \$1.8795, resulting in total Municipal and Education combined rates of \$2.4125 Homestead and \$2.5748 Non-Homestead.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
 - Julie and the Board continued discussions from their last regularly scheduled meeting regarding the truck loan.
 - Motion made to accept the Vermont Municipal Equipment Fund Loan.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None
 - Result; Approved

G. Emergency Management Director's Report:

- Emergency Management Director, Bob Morlino, provided a report to the Board:
 - Two bariatric cots have been purchased for the emergency shelter.
 - R. Morlino attended the virtual FBI Quarterly meeting.
 - Ed and Debra Evans have been added to the Pawlet Emergency Management roster, both having Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) experience from their time in the southwest.

H. Health Officer's Report: No report at this meeting.

I. Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF): No report at this meeting.

J. Facilities Report:

- The Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept requested to utilize the Town Hall Auditorium to conduct their CPR training on 7/30 from 6:30pm-9:30pm.
 - Motion made to authorized the PVFD to use the Town Hall.
 - Mover: Bob Jones

- 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved.

K. Mettawee School Board (MSB) Report:

- Julie Mach provided an overview of initiatives and tasks discussed and accomplished during the most recent MSB meeting.

8. Old or unfinished business:

- Efforts continue pertaining to the exploration of options for the Town's gravel pit, as well as for the creation of a slag pile log.
- Jon Weiss and Kristin Powers began discussing and drafting a policy to ensure the Town's governing bodies adhere to the updates to the Open Meeting Law.
 - Kristin provided a summary of Jon's draft to the Board, with discussions to continue at the next regularly scheduled meeting; once the Board has had a chance to review.
 - Frank Nelson contributed some takeaways from a discussion with the VLCT regarding the Open Meeting Law updates.
 - Following some additional discussion, the consensus of the Board was to authorize Julie Mach to procure a small recording device.
- Bob Jones provided an update on the septic alarm that was going off at the Library. Harley is working to get a hold of Leon Corey to assess the situation.
- Bob Jones shared with the Board that there is a resident interested in purchasing the railroad building in West Pawlet.
 - Julie Mach confirmed that the building is privately owned and interested parties may contact the owners directly.
- Jessica Van Oort provided an update on the bike/ped grant.
 - A meeting with Peter Pochop, Steffanie Bourque, and the project manager from VHB provided the opportunity for Jessica, on behalf of the Board, to ask questions about the project and process.
 - A field survey is anticipated for the end of July, at which point VHB will be conducting and compiling research for the project base mapping.

- A public weigh-in meeting is anticipated for November, however an in-person site visit will likely take place prior. This in-person visit will also be an opportunity for residents to ask questions.

9. New Business: None.

10. Public comment:

- Frank Nelson spoke to a thermostat problem in the Town Hall.
- Barbara O'Conner inquired about the ceiling in the Town Hall Auditorium. Mr. Beecher acknowledged that there is no activity at this time.
- Cori Rail expressed and shared a letter of interest for the vacant position on the Library Board.
 - Some discussions took place amongst the Board and Body regarding the process of appointing, training, etc.

11. Motion made to adjourn at 8:29pm

- Mover: Jessica Van Oort
- 2nd: Bob Jones
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved