

# TOWN OF PEACHAM

## MINUTES OF THE SELECTBOARD MEETING

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

APPROVED

Selectboard Members (via phone/video conference): Beatrice Ring, Peter Craig, Richard Browne  
Public (via phone/video conference): Town Clerk Thomas Galinat, Road Foreman Jeremy Withers,  
Selectboard Clerk Rebecca Washington, Dave Stauffer, Neil Monteith, Mel Reis, Rodney Reis, John Reiss,  
Martha Winston, Alfred Dedam, Jonathan Kaplan, Wendy Morgan, Mark Elliot, Ron Craig

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair of the Selectboard Beatrice Ring at 6:30pm.
2. Additions to the agenda
  - a. No additions.
3. Highway Department update
  - a. Bids for winter sand and liquid calcium chloride.
    - i. Withers opened two bids for winter sand.
      - a) Gingue Construction in Lyndonville submitted a bid for \$3.95/yard.
      - b) Chief Crushing and Excavation Inc. in South Ryegate submitted a bid for \$6.00/yard.
    - ii. Withers opened two bids for liquid calcium chloride.
      - a) All State's Construction Inc. submitted a bid for \$0.89/gallon.
      - b) The Gorman Group submitted a bid for \$0.81/gallon.
      - c) The tanks that are currently at the Highway Garage belong to The Gorman Group.
    - iii. **P. Craig moved to buy liquid calcium chloride from The Gorman Group and to buy winter sand from Gingue Construction. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
  - b. Withers is interested in a product called Kold-Flo, which is used to seal cracks and preserve asphalt. The town has the opportunity to purchase the equipment along with Danville for about \$2,000. Some of the cracks in the pavement are too far gone but it could be used on new cracks.
    - i. Withers will do some more research on the product and find out if it's been used successfully in other Vermont towns.
  - c. The road crew will continue working on the ditch on Blanchard Hill Road.
  - d. R. Reis thanked Withers for filling up the potholes so quickly and getting signs in the crosswalks to slow down traffic in Peacham.
  - e. Discussion ensued on the status of putting in a fourth stop sign in South Peacham.
    - i. Ring will review the minutes from last fall to determine its status.
4. Town Clerk update/septic agreement update
  - a. Galinat has been doing deed research in order to establish easements that will be needed for the church to be able to join the town's septic system.
  - b. Galinat is waiting to see what the money coming from the American Rescue Fund Act will be earmarked for. Peacham should receive roughly \$70,000 toward the end of May or early June.
5. Dead cars at Ewell's Mill parking lot
  - a. Galinat expressed his frustration as a resident that the issue at Ewell's Mill parking lot hadn't already been addressed and described a concerning situation that occurred as a result of a car being left there for months.
  - b. The owners of the car have recently been made aware that it is an issue.
  - c. The Selectboard discussed the best course of action and agreed that Withers will order and install a "No Overnight Parking" sign and P. Craig will let the owners of the car know that the car has to be gone by the end of the week or it will be towed at their expense.
6. Private pruning of trees in the right-of-way
  - a. Galinat explained that he asked Dave Stauffer to trim the apple tree and remove the brush outside of Town Hall. He expressed his appreciation for all of the free work that Stauffer does around town, including the trimming and clearing he has done at Ewell's Mill Park and the Roller Barn.
  - b. Browne explained three concerns pertaining to trees in Peacham.
    - i. There needs to be a clear plan in place for harvesting dying trees (for example, ash trees) in the right-of-way. The policy should include procedures for landowners harvesting the trees and how to involve the Tree Warden.
      - a) Monteith will coordinate with the Tree Board on drafting a policy for discussion at a June Selectboard meeting.
    - ii. If there is work being done on trees on town property, there needs to be a clear process for how that's supposed to happen.
      - a) Monteith will coordinate with the Tree Board on drafting a policy for discussion at a June Selectboard meeting.
    - iii. There have been no Tree Board minutes posted since October of 2020.
      - a) Monteith explained that there haven't been any Tree Board meetings since then.
      - b) The Tree Board, like all other town boards, has to follow Open Meeting Law with warned meetings and posted agendas and minutes.
  - c. Galinat pointed out that the tree work at Ewell's Mill Park and the Roller Barn is usually handled by the work crew but that they are not working yet.



- i. Galinat suggested that, when drafting the policies, the Tree Board look at dealing with the larger pieces of town property and how to handle downed trees.
  - ii. Monteith is going to try and get a meeting scheduled for the Conservation Commission to address how to approach the town-owned properties, including the 190-acre town forest, the 15 acres of land at the Devil's Hill trail parking lot, and the Ewell's Mill Park.
- 7. Sale of porta-potty at Transfer Station
  - a. Chandler Hill Farm asked the Selectboard about buying the used porta-potty from the town. The town purchased it for \$500 and it has been sitting unused at the Transfer Station for the last few years.
  - b. Discussion followed and the Selectboard agreed to sell it by sealed bid with no set minimum bid.
  - c. Washington will put up a post on Front Porch Forum and the town website soliciting bids to be opened at the May 19th Selectboard meeting.
- 8. Fire District/Munson road update
  - a. Kaplan explained that the Fire District had an 11-month checkup for the water line replacement project in the village. The engineer has 30 days to fix the issues discussed at the meeting, which include patching two of the road cuts near the cafe, removing gravel at the front of the library, and reseeding some grass. During the meeting, Withers got some ideas about alleviating the drainage issues.
  - b. In response to questions from M. Reis, Kaplan said that the road cut across from Laurie Kozar's house is not going to be patched because it isn't sunken. In addition, the two town trees that were removed during the project can't be replaced in the same location because the roots would have trouble growing against the new pipes. The Fire District will pay for two new trees to be planted at locations determined by the Tree Board.
- 9. Worcester Road discussion
  - a. Dedam expressed concern that his neighbor was granted permission by the Selectboard to hire a private contractor to alter Worcester Road, without a clear understanding of the scope of the work. Dedam pointed out that there was not a public hearing before the decision was made and that the process for altering a road, as specified by state statute, was not followed.
  - b. P. Craig expressed concern about being involved in a feud between neighbors and explained that the plan was discussed at a meeting and that he and Withers met with the contractor, Shane Stevenson, on-site. The plan is for the road to be widened so that there can be ditches on both sides of the road. The town equipment will stay a little further away from the maple trees and the work will be done at no expense to the town.
    - i. Dedam stated that the topography of the road doesn't allow for the road to be both wider and to have two ditches.
  - c. Withers explained that the contractor is just working with what's there and is planning to cut trees on Ken Danielson's property and rework the ditch there to make that side of the road feel more open. The travel portion of the road can't be altered much because of the lay of the land.
  - d. Withers will make sure the contractor notifies him before any work is started and will meet with him on-site to be very clear about what work will go on and confirm that the travel portion of the road won't change.
    - i. Dedam is concerned about what happens if the travel portion of the road ends up being changed anyway. If it does end up being moved 2-3 feet uphill, as he understands it's going to be, the centerline would be affected, which is a reference point for surveying.
  - e. Browne pointed out that, if the travel portion of the road is not changing, it's not an alteration of the road, it doesn't require a hearing, and the work can proceed.
    - i. However, if the plan is to alter the travel portion of the road, the decision will have to be reconsidered and the process for altering a road will have to be followed.
    - ii. Withers will confirm the details of the plan with the contractor before it moves forward.
  - f. Dedam brought up an additional concern of debris being routinely placed in the road by a neighbor.
    - i. Browne will meet with Withers and the contractor at Worcester Road and help address that issue as well.
- 10. Relocation of the intersection of Maple Tree Lane and County Road
  - a. The town has to go through the legal process for relocating the intersection, which includes a public hearing that is warned for 30 days and published in the newspaper.
  - b. The project is budgeted for \$15,000.
  - c. **P. Craig moved to warn a hearing for 30 days from May 6th. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
  - d. The hearing will be on-site at the intersection of Maple Tree Lane and County Road at 6:30pm on June 16th.
- 11. Peacham Pond Greeter Program update
  - a. Winston, who is the President of the Peacham Pond Association and writes the grant for the Peacham Pond Greeter Program, explained that the program aims to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species by having a greeter at the pond on weekends to log where boats have been, inspect boats for invasive species, drain water, and make sure it's safe for them to come into the pond. This summer will be the fourth summer of the program and the town will again be a partner in the grant. There were about 250 watercraft logged the first two years of the program and 406 watercraft logged last summer. The costs associated with the program are mostly payroll for the greeter and other work is done in-kind by volunteers.



- b. The grant process has changed a little this year and the amount that will need to be matched is known already. The total cost of the program is \$5,544 and the grant will be for \$3,134, which leaves a gap of \$2,410. A Peacham Pond Fund was started and \$1,300 has been raised by donation. Winston asked the Selectboard to consider matching that and giving \$1,200 to the grant program.
    - i. Winston pointed out that Peacham Pond has remained pristine and that the presence of invasive species would affect the property values on the pond.
    - ii. There is already \$400 in the budget for the town's contribution to the project.
  - c. Winston will email the Selectboard data on the program for review before a decision is made.
12. State of Vermont wastewater initiative
- a. The Selectboard will invite Jake Thomas to the next Selectboard meeting to discuss the wastewater initiative.
13. Town Hall construction: RFP opening
- a. No proposals were submitted.
  - b. P. Craig will rework the RFP and eliminate the completion date.
14. Approve minutes
- a. **P. Craig moved to approve the minutes of April 21, 2021 as presented by the Selectboard Clerk. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
15. Review and approve bills
- a. **P. Craig moved to pay the bills as presented. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
16. Review correspondence
- a. The Selectboard reviewed a letter regarding copper nails in trees along Onion Point Road.
    - i. Monteith received a call about the same issue and went to look at the trees. He thought that someone put the nails in the trees in the hopes of killing them, which doesn't work.
    - ii. The Selectboard noted that the concern was received and P. Craig pointed out that vandalism is a legal matter and out of the Selectboard's hands.
17. Adjourn
- a. **P. Craig moved to adjourn. Browne seconded.**
  - b. R. Reis asked if the road in the village by the Jensen's house could be graded or if the asphalt in the road could be removed for easier maintenance.
    - i. Withers will go take a look at it and report back at the next Selectboard meeting.
  - c. **All in favor of adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.**

These minutes were approved as written by the Peacham Selectboard at its regular meeting on 5/19/21.

Rebecca Washington, Selectboard Clerk

